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1766

C O M E D Y.

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By Mr. *WILLIAM SHAKESPEAR.*

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DCC XXXIV.



# Dramatis Personæ.

*KING of France.*

*Duke of Florence.*

*Bertram, Count of Rouffillon.*

*Lafeu, an old Lord.*

*Parolles, a parasitical follower of Bertram, a coward, but vain, and a great pretender to valour.*

*Several young French Lords, that serve with Bertram in the Florentine war*

*Steward, }  
Clown, } Servants to the Countess of Rouffillon.*

*Countess of Rouffillon, mother to Bertram.*

*Helena, Daughter to Gerard de Narbon, a famous physician, some time since dead.*

*An old widow of Florence.*

*Diana, Daughter to the widow.*

*Violenta, }  
Mariana, } Neighbours and friends to the widow.*

*Lords attending on the King, Officers, Soldiers, &c.*

*SCENE; lies partly in France, and partly in Tuscany.*

*The plot taken from Boccace, Decam. 3. Nov. 9.*

*Knapp  
Jan. 14, 1922  
e*



ALL'S well that ENDS well.

ACT I. SCENE I.

Rouffillon in France.

Enter Bertram, the Countess of Rouffillon, Helena,  
and Lafeu in mourning.

COUNTESS.

IN delivering my son from me, I bury  
a second Husband.

*Ber.* And in going, madam, I weep  
o'er my father's death anew; but I  
must attend his Majesty's command,  
to whom I am now in ward, ever-  
more in subjection.

*Laf.* You shall find of the King a  
husband, madam; you, Sir, a father. He that so ge-  
nerally is at all times good, must of necessity hold his  
virtue to you, whose worthiness would stir it up where  
it wanted, rather than lack it where there is such abun-  
dance.

*Count.* What hope is there of his Majesty's amend-  
ment?

*Laf.* He hath abandon'd his physicians, madam, un-  
der whose practices he hath persecuted time with hope,  
and finds no other advantage in the process, but only the  
losing of hope by time.

*Count.* This young gentlewoman had a father, (O  
that had! how sad a passage 'tis!) whose skill was al-  
most as great as his honesty: had it stretch'd so far, it  
would

would have made nature immortal, and death should have play for lack of work. Would, for the King's sake, he were living, I think it would be the death of the King's disease.

*Laf.* How call'd you the man you speak of, madam?

*Count.* He was famous, Sir, in his profession, and it was his great right to be so: *Gerrard de Narbon.*

*Laf.* He was excellent indeed, madam; the King very lately spoke of him admiringly and mourningly: he was skilful enough to have liv'd still, if knowledge could be set up against mortality.

*Ber.* What is it, my good lord, the King languishes of?

*Laf.* A fistula, my lord.

*Ber.* I heard not of it before.

*Laf.* I would it were not notorious. Was this gentlewoman the daughter of *Gerard de Narbon*?

*Count.* His sole child, my lord, and bequeathed to my overlooking, I have those hopes of her good, that her education promises her; disposition she inherits, which makes fair gifts fairer; for where an unclean mind carries virtuous qualities, there commendations go with pity, they are virtues and traitors too: in her they are the better for their simpleness, she derives her honesty, and atchieves her goodness.

*Laf.* Your commendations, madam, get tears from her.

*Count.* 'Tis the best brine a maiden can season her praise in. The remembrance of her father never approaches her heart, but the tyranny of her sorrows takes all livelihood from her cheek. No more of this, *Helena*, go to, no more, lest it be rather thought yet affect a sorrow, than to have——

*Hel.* I do affect a sorrow indeed, but I have it too.

*Laf.* Moderate lamentation is the right of the dead, excessive grief the enemy to the living.

*Count.* If the living be enemy to the grief, the excess makes it soon mortal.

*Ber.* Madam, I desire your holy wishes.

*Laf.* How understand we that ?

*Count.* Be thou blest, *Bertram*, and succeed thy father  
In manners as in shape: thy blood and virtue  
Contend for empire in thee, and thy goodness  
Share with thy birth-right. Love all, trust a few,  
Do wrong to none: be able for thine enemy  
Rather in power than use; and keep thy friend  
Under thy own life's key: be check'd for silence,  
But never tax'd for speech. What heav'n more will,  
That thee may furnish, and my prayers pluck down,  
Fall on thy head. Farewel, my lord,  
'Tis an unseason'd courtier, good my lord,  
Advise him.

*Laf.* He cannot want the best  
That shall attend his love.

*Count.* Heav'n bless him. Farewel, *Bertram*,

[*Exit Count.*]

*Ber.* [*to Hel.*] The best wishes that can be forg'd in  
your thoughts be servants to you: be comfortable to my  
mother, your mistress, and make much of her.

*Laf.* Farewel, pretty lady, you must hold the credit  
of your father. [Exeunt *Ber.* and *Laf.*]

*Hel.* Oh, were that all—I think not on my father,  
And these great tears grace his remembrance more  
Than those I shed for him. What was he like?  
I have forgot him. My imagination  
Carries no favour in it, but my *Bertram's*.  
I am undone, there is no living, none,  
If *Bertram* be away. It were all one  
That I should love a bright partic'lar star.  
And think to wed it; he is so above me:  
In his bright radiance and collateral light  
Must I be comforted, not in his sphere.  
Th' ambition in my love thus plagues it self;  
The hind that would be mated by the lion,  
Must die for love. 'Twas pretty, tho' a plague,  
To see him every hour, to sit and draw  
His arched brows, his hawking eye, his curls  
In our heart's table: heart too capable  
Of every line and trick of his sweet favour.

But now he's gone, and my idolatrous fancy  
Must sanctifie his relicks. Who comes here?

*Enter Parolles.*

One that goes with him : I love him for his fake,  
And yet I know him a notorious liar ;  
Think him a great way fool, solely a coward ;  
Yet these fix'd evils fit so fit in him,  
That they take place, when virtue's steely bones  
Look bleak in the cold wind ; full oft we see  
Cold wisdom waiting on superfluous folly.

*Par.* Save you, fair Queen.

*Hel.* And you, monarch.

*Par.* No.

*Hel.* And no.

*Par.* Are you meditating on virginity ?

*Hel.* Ay : you have some stain of soldier in you ;  
let me ask you a question. Man is enemy to virginity,  
how may we barricado it against him ?

*Par.* Keep him out.

*Hel.* But he assails ; and our virginity, though va-  
liant, in the defence yet is weak : unfold to us some  
warlike resistance.

*Par.* There is none : man setting down before you,  
will undermine you and blow you up.

*Hel.* Bless our poor virginity from underminers and  
blowers up. Is there no military policy how virgins  
might blow up men ?

*Par.* Virginity being blown down, man will quick-  
lier be blown up : marry, in blowing him down again,  
with the breath your selves made, you lose your city.  
It is not politick in the commonwealth of nature  
to preserve virginity. - Loss of virginity is rational en-  
crease, and there was never virgin got, 'till virginity  
was first lost. That you were made of is metal to  
make virgins. Virginity, by being once lost, may be  
ten times found ; by being ever kept, it is ever lost ; 'tis  
too cold a companion ; away with't.

*Hel.* I will stand for't a little, though therefore I die  
a virgin.

*Par.* There's little can be said in't ; 'tis against the  
rule



rule of nature. To speak on the part of virginity, is to accuse your mother ; which is most infallible disobedience. ' He that hangs himself is a virgin : Virginity murders it self, and should be buried in highways out of all sanctified limit, as a desperate offendress against nature. Virginity breeds mites ; much like a cheese, consumes it self to the very paring, and so dies with feeding its own stomach. Besides, virginity is peevish, proud, idle, made of self-love, which is the most prohibited sin in the canon. Keep it not, you cannot chuse but lose by't. Out with't: within ten years it will make it self two, which is a goodly increase, and the principal it self not much the worse. ' Away with't.

*Hel.* How might one do, Sir, to lose it to her own liking?

*Par.* Let me see. Marry ill, to like him that re'er it likes. 'Tis a commodity will lose the gloss with lying. The longer kept, the less worth: Off with't while 'tis vendible. Answer the time of request. Virginity, like an old courtier, wears her cap out of fashion, richly futed, but unsutable, just like the brooch and the tooth-pick, which we wear not now : Your date is better in your pye and your porridge, than in your cheek ; and your virginity, your old virginity, is like one of our *French* wither'd pears ; it looks ill, it eats drily ; marry, 'tis a wither'd pear : It was formerly better, marry, yet 'tis a wither'd pear. Will you any thing with it?

*Hel.* Not my virginity yet.

There shall your master have a thousand loves,  
A mother, and a mistress, and a friend,  
A phoenix, captain, and an enemy,  
A guide, a goddess, and a sovereign.  
A counsellor, a traitor, and a dear ;  
His humblest ambition, proud humility,  
His jarring concord ; and his discord dulcet,  
His faith, his sweet disaster ; with a world  
Of pretty fond adoptious christendoms  
That blinking *Cupid* gossips. Now shall he——

I know not what he shall—God fend him well—  
 'The court's a learning place——and he is one ——

*Par.* What one, i'fath?

*Hel.* That I wish well —— 'tis pity ——

*Par.* That wishing well had not a body in't,  
 Which might be felt, that we the poorer born,  
 Whose baser stars do shut us up in wishes,  
 Might with effects of them follow our friends,  
 And shew what we alone must think, which never  
 Returns us thanks.

*Enter Page.*

*Page.* Monsieur *Parolles*,  
 My lord calls for you.

*Par.* Little *Helen* farewell, if I can remember thee, I  
 will think of thee at court.

*Hel.* Monsieur *Parolles*, you were born under a  
 charitable star.

*Par.* Under *Mars*, I.

*Hel.* I especially think, under *Mars*.

*Par.* Why under *Mars*?

*Hel.* The wars have kept you so under, that you  
 must needs be born under *Mars*.

*Par.* When he was predominant.

*Hel.* When he was retrograde, I think rather.

*Par.* Why think you so?

*Hel.* You go so much backward when you fight.

*Par.* That's for advantage.

*Hel.* So is running away, when fear proposes safe-  
 ty: But the composition that your valour and fear makes  
 in you, is a virtue of a good wing, and I like the wear  
 well.

*Par.* I am so full of business, I cannot answer thee  
 acutely: I will return perfect courtier, in the which  
 my instruction shall serve to naturalize thee, so thou  
 wilt be capable of courtiers counsel, and understand what  
 advice shall thrust upon thee; else thou diest in thine  
 unthankfulness, and thine ignorance makes thee away;  
 farewell. When thou hast leisure, say thy prayers;  
 when thou hast none, remember thy friends; get thee a  
 good

good husband, and use him as he uses thee: so farewell.

[*Exit.*]

*Hel.* Our remedies oft in our selves do lie,  
Which we ascribe to heav'n. The fated sky  
Gives us free scope, only doth backward pull  
Our slow designs, when we our selves are dull.  
What power is it which mounts my love so high,  
That makes me see, and cannot feed mine eye?  
The mightiest space in fortune, nature brings  
To join like likes, and kifs like native things.  
Impossible be strange attempts to those  
That weigh their pain in sense, and do suppose  
What hath been, cannot be. Who ever strove  
To shew her merit, that did miss her love?  
The King's disease——my project may deceive me,  
But my intents are fix'd, and will not leave me. [*Ex.*]

*Flourish Cornets.* Enter the King of France with letters,  
and divers attendants.

*King.* The *Florentines* and *Senoy's* are by th' ears,  
Have fought with equal fortune, and continue  
A braving war.

1 *Lord.* So 'tis reported, Sir,

*King.* Nay, 'tis most credible; we here receive it,  
A certainty vouch'd from our cousin *Austria*;  
With caution, that the *Florentine* will move us  
For speedy aid; wherein our dearest friend  
Prejudicates the business, and would seem  
To have us make denial.

1 *Lord.* His love and wisdom,  
Approv'd so to your majesty, may plead  
For ample Credence.

*King.* He hath arm'd our answer,  
And *Florence* is deny'd before he comes:  
Yet for our gentlemen that mean to see  
The *Tuscan* service, freely have they leave  
To stand on either part.

2 *Lord.* It may well serve  
A nursery to our gentry, who are sick  
For breathing and exploit.



*King.* What's he comes here ?

*Enter Bertram, Lafeu and Parolles.*

*1 Lord.* It is the Count *Rouffillon*, my good lord,  
Young *Bertram*.

*King.* Youth, thou bear'st thy father's face,  
Frank nature, rather curious than in haste,  
Compos'd thee well. Thy father's moral parts  
May't thou inherit too. Welcome to *Paris*.

*Ber.* My thanks and duty are your majesty's.

*King.* I would I had that corporal soundness now,  
As when thy father and my self in friendship  
First try'd our soldiership : he did look far  
Into the service of the time, and was  
Disciplin'd of the brav'st. He lasted long,  
But on us both did haggish age steal on,  
And wore us out of act. It much repairs me  
To talk of your good father : in his youth  
He had the wit, which I can well observe  
To day in our young lords ; but they may jest,  
Till their own scorn return to them unnoted,  
Ere they can hide their levity in honour ;  
So like a courtier, no contempt or bitterness  
Were in his pride, or sharpness ; if they were,  
His equal had awak'd them, and his honour  
Clock to itself, knew the true minute when  
Exception bid him speak ; and at that time  
His tongue obey'd his hand. Who were below him  
He us'd as creatures of another place,  
And bow'd his eminent top to their low ranks,  
Making them proud of his humility,  
In their poor praise, he humbled : such a man  
Might be a copy to these younger times ;  
Which follow'd well, would now demonstrate them  
But goes backward.

*Ber.* His remembrance, Sir,  
Lies richer in your thoughts, than on his tomb :  
So in approof lives not his epitaph,  
As in your royal Speech.

*King.*

*King.* Would I were with him; he would always say,  
(Methinks I hear him now) his plausible words  
He scatter'd not in ears, but grafted them  
To grow there and to bear; let me not live,  
(Thus his good melancholy oft began  
On the catastrophe and heel of pastime  
When it was out) let me not live, quoth he,  
After my flame lacks oil, to be the snuff  
Of younger spirits, whose apprehensive senses  
All but new things disdain; whose judgments are  
Mere fathers of their garments; whose constancies  
Expire before their fashions; this he wish'd.  
I after him, do after him wish too  
(Since I nor wax nor honey can bring home,)  
I quickly were dissolved from my hive.  
To give some labourers room.

*2 Lord.* You're loved, Sir;  
They that least lend it you, shall lack you first.

*King.* I fill a place, I know't. How long is't, Count,  
Since the physician at your father's died?  
He was much fam'd.

*Ber.* Some six months since, my Lord.

*King.* If he were living, I would try him yet;  
Lend me an arm; the rest have worn me out  
With several applications; nature and sickness  
Debate it at their leisure. Welcome, Count,  
My son's no dearer.

*Ber.* Thanks to your majesty.

[*Exeunt.*

*Enter Countess, Steward and Clown.*

*Count.* I will now hear, what say you of this gentlewoman?

*Stew.* Madam, the care I have had to even your content, I wish might be found in the calender of my past endeavours: for then we wound our modesty, and make foul the clearness of our deservings, when of our selves we publish them.

*Count.* What does this knave here? get you gone, scurrilloway: the complaints I have heard of you, I do not all believe; 'tis my slowness that I do not, for I know  
you

you lack not folly to commit them, and have ability enough to make such knaveries yours.

*Clo.* 'Tis not unknown to you, madam, I am a poor fellow.

*Count.* Well, Sir.

*Clo.* No, madam, 'tis not so well that I am poor, tho' many of the rich are damn'd; but if I have your ladyship's good will to go the world, *Isbel* the woman and I will do as we may.

*Count.* Wilt thou needs be a beggar?

*Clo.* I do beg your good will in this case.

*Count.* In what case?

*Clo.* In *Isbel's* case and mine own; service is no heritage, and I think I shall never have the blessing of God, 'till I have issue o' my body; for they say bearns are blessings.

*Count.* Tell me the reason why thou wilt marry.

*Clo.* My poor body, madam, requires it. I am driven on by the flesh, and he must needs go that the devil drives.

*Count.* Is this all your worship's reason?

*Clo.* Faith, madam, I have other holy reasons, such as they are.

*Count.* May the world know them?

*Clo.* I have been, madam, a wicked creature, as you and all flesh and blood are, and, indeed, I do marry that I may repent.

*Count.* Thy marriage sooner than thy wickedness.

*Clo.* I am out of friends, madam, and I hope to have friends for my wife's sake.

*Count.* Such friends are thine enemies, knave.

*Clo.* Y'are shallow, madam, in great friends? for the knaves come to do that for me which I am weary of; he that eres my land, spares my team, and gives me leave to inne the crop; if I be his cuckold, he's my drudge; he that comforts my wife, is the cherisher of my flesh and blood; he that cherisheth my flesh and blood, loves my flesh and blood; he that loves my flesh and blood, is my friend: *Ergo*, he that kisses my wife is my friend. If men could be contented to be what they are, there were no fear in marriage;

marriage; for young *Charbon* the puritan, and old *Poyfam* the papist, howsoe'er their hearts are sever'd in religion, their heads are both one, they may joul horns together like any deer i'th' herd

*Count.* Wilt thou ever be a foul-mouth'd and calumnious knave?

*Clo.* A prophet I, madam, and I speak the truth the next way,

For I the ballad will repeat, which men full true shall find,

Your marriage comes by destiny, your cuckow sings by kind.

*Count.* Get you gone, Sir, I'll talk with you more anon.

*Stew.* May it please you, madam, that he bid *Helen* come to you, of her I am to speak.

*Count.* Sirrah, tell my gentlewoman I would speak with her, *Helen*, I mean.

*Clo.* Was this fair face the cause, quoth she,

Why the *Grecians* sacked *Troy*?

Was this King *Priam's* joy?

With that she sigh'd as she stood,

And gave this sentence then;

Among nine bad if one be good,

There's yet one good in ten.

*Count.* What, one good in ten! You corrupt the song, sirrah.

*Clo.* One good woman in ten, madam, which is a purifying o'th' song: Would God would serve the world so all the year, we'd find no fault with the tithe woman if I were the parson; one in ten, quoth a'! an we might have a good woman born but every blazing star, or at an earthquake, 'twould mend the lottery well; a man may draw his heart out, ere he pluck one.

*Count.* You'll be gone, Sir knave, and do as I command you.

*Clo.* That man that should be at a woman's command, and yet no hurt done! tho' honestly be no puritan, yet it will do ~~no~~ hurt; it will wear the surplis of humility over



over the black gown of a big heart: I am going, forthwith, the business is for *Helena* to come hither. [*Exit.*

*Count.* Well now.

*Stew.* I know, madam, you love your gentlewoman intirely.

*Count.* Faith, I do; her father bequeath'd her to me; and she herself, without other advantages, may lawfully make title to as much love as she finds; there is more owing her than is paid, and more shall be paid her than she'll demand.

*Stew.* Madam, I was very late more near her than I think she wish'd me; alone she was, and did communicate to her self, her own words to her own ears; she thought, I dare vow for her, they touch'd not any stranger sense. Her matter was, she lov'd your son; Fortune, she said, was no Goddess, that had put such difference betwixt their two estates; Love, no God, that would not extend his might, only where qualities were level: Complain'd against the queen of virgins, that would suffer her poor Knight to be surpriz'd without rescue in the first assault, or ransom afterward. This she deliver'd in the most bitter touch of sorrow that e'er I heard a virgin exclaim in, which I held it my duty speedily to acquaint you withal; sithence in the loss that may happen, it concerns you something to know it.

*Count.* You have discharg'd this honestly, keep it to your self; many likelihoods inform'd me of this before, which hung so tottering in the balance, that I could neither believe nor mildoubt: Pray you leave me, shall this in your bosom, and I thank you for your honest care; I will speak with you further anon.

[*Exit Steward.*

*Enter Helena.*

*Count.* Ev'n so it was with me when I was young;  
If we are nature's, these are ours: This thorn  
Doth to our rose of youth rightly belong,

Our blood to us, this to our blood is born;

It is the show and seal of nature's truth,  
Where love's strong passion is imprest in youth;  
By your remembrances of days foregone,

Such

Such were our faults, or then we thought them none.  
Her eye is sick on't, I observe her now.

*Hel.* What is your pleasure, madam?

*Count.* *Helen*, you know, I am a mother to you.

*Hel.* Mine honourable mistress.

*Count.* Nay, a mother;

Why not a mother? when I said a mother,  
Methought you saw a serpent; what's in mother,  
That you start at it? I say, I'm your mother,  
And put you in the catalogue of those  
That were enwomb'd mine; 'tis often seen  
Adoption strives with nature, and choice breeds  
A native slip to us from foreign seeds,  
You ne'er oppress me with a mother's groan,  
Yet I express to you a mother's care:  
God's mercy, maiden, do's it curd thy blood,  
To say I am thy mother? what's the matter,  
That this diltemper'd messenger of wet,  
The many colour'd *Iris* rounds thine eyes?  
Why—that you are my daughter?

*Hel.* That I am not.

*Count.* I say, I am your mother.

*Hel.* Pardon, madam.

The *Count Roussillon* cannot be my brother:  
I am from humble, he from honour'd name;  
No note upon my parents, his all noble.  
My master, my dear lord he is, and I  
His servant live, and will his vassal die:  
He must not be my brother,

*Count.* Nor I your mother?

*Hel.* You are my mother, madam; would you were  
(So that my lord your son were not my brother)  
Indeed my mother—or were you both our mothers  
I care no more for, than I do for heav'n,  
So I were not his sister: Can't no other?  
But I your daughter, he must be my brother.

*Count.* Yes, *Helen*, you might be my daughter-in-law,  
God shield you mean it not, daughter and mother  
So strive upon your pulse; what, pale again?  
My fear hath catch'd your fondness. Now I see

The myſt'ry of your lovenefs, and find  
 Your ſalt tears head; now to all ſenſe 'tis groſs,  
 You love my ſon; invention is aſham'd  
 Againſt the proclamation of thy paſſion,  
 To ſay thou doſt not; therefore tell me true,  
 But tell me then 'tis ſo. For look, thy cheeks  
 Confefs it one to th' other, and thine eyes  
 See it ſo groſſly ſhown in thy behaviour,  
 That in their kind they ſpeak it: only ſin  
 And helliſh obſtinacy tie thy tongue,  
 That truth ſhould be ſuſpected; ſpeak, iſ't ſo?  
 If it be ſo, you've wound a goodly clew:  
 If it be not, forſwear't; howe'er I charge thee,  
 As heav'n ſhall work in me for thine avail,  
 To tell me truly.

*Hel.* Good madam, pardon me.

*Count.* Do you love my ſon?

*Hel.* Your pardon, noble miſtreſs.

*Count.* Love you my ſon?

*Hel.* Do not you love him, madam?

*Count.* Go not about; my love hath in't a bond,  
 Whereof the world takes note: Come, come, diſcloſe  
 The ſtate of your affection, for your paſſions  
 Have to the full appeach'd.

*Hel.* Then I confeſs

Here on my knee, before high heav'ns and you,  
 That before you, and next unto high heav'n,  
 I love your ſon:  
 My friends were poor, but honeſt; ſo's my love;  
 Be not offended, for it hurts not him  
 That he is lov'd of me; I follow him not  
 By any token of preſumptuous ſuit,  
 Nor would I have him, till I do deſerve him,  
 Yet never know how that deſert ſhall be:  
 I know I love in vain, ſtrive againſt hope;  
 Yet in this captious and intenible ſive,  
 I ſtill pour in the water of my love,  
 And lack not to loſe ſtill; thus *Indian* like,  
 Religious in mine error, I adore  
 The ſun that looks upon his worſhipper,



But know of him on more. My dearest madam,  
Let not your hate incounter with my love,  
For loving where you do; but if your self,  
Whose aged honour cites a virtuous youth,  
Did ever in so true a flame of liking  
Wish chastly, and love dearly, that your *Dian*  
Was both her self and love; O then give pity  
To her whose state is such, that cannot chuse  
But lend and give where she is sure to lose;  
That seeks not to find that which search implies,  
But riddle-like, lives sweetly where she dies.

*Count.* Had you not lately an intent, speak truly,  
To go to *Paris*?

*Hel.* Madam, I had.

*Count.* Wherefore? tell true.

*Hel.* I will tell truth, by grace it self I swear;  
You know my father left me some prescriptions  
Of rare and prov'd effects, such as his reading  
And manifest experience had collected  
For general sov'reignty; and that he will'd me  
In heedfull'st reservation to bestow them,  
As notes, whose faculties inclusive were,  
More than they were in note: Amongst the rest,  
There is a remedy, approv'd set down,  
To cure the desperate languishings, whereof  
The King is render'd lost.

*Count.* This was your motive for *Paris*, was it, speak?

*Hel.* My lord, your son made me to think of this;  
Else *Paris*, and the medicine, and the King,  
Had from the conversation of my thoughts  
Haply been absent then.

*Count.* But think you, *Helen*,  
If you should tender your supposed aid,  
He would receive it? he and his physicians  
Are of a mind; he, that they cannot help him:  
They, that they cannot help. How shall they credit  
A poor unlearned virgin, when the schools,  
Embowell'd of their doctrine, have left off  
The danger to it self?

*Hel.*

*Hel.* There's something in't  
More than my father's skill, which was the great't  
Of his profession, that his good receipt  
Shall for my legacy be sanctified  
By th' luckiest stars in heav'n; and would your honour  
But give me leave to try success, I'd venture  
The well-lost life of mine on his grace's cure,  
By such a day and hour.

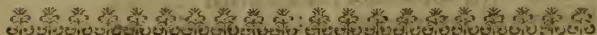
*Count.* Do'st thou believe't?

*Hel.* Ay, madam, knowingly.

*Count.* Why, *Helen*, thou shalt have my leave and  
love,

Means and attendants, and my loving greetings  
To those of mine in court. I'll stay at home,  
And pray God's blessing into thy attempt:  
Begone to-morrow, and be sure of this,  
What I can help thee to thou shalt not miss.

*Exc.*



## A C T II.

*Enter the King, with divers young Lords taking leave for  
the Florentine War. Bertram and Parolles. Flourish  
Cornets.*

*King.* **F**AREWELL, young Lords: these warlike  
principles

Do not throw from you: you, my lords, farewell;  
Share the advice betwixt you. If both gain,  
The gift doth stretch it self as 'tis receiv'd,  
And is enough for both.

*1 Lord.* 'Tis our hope, Sir,  
After well-enter'd soldiers, to return  
And find your Grace in health.

*King.* No, no, it cannot be; and yet my heart  
Will not confess it owns the malady  
That doth my life besiege; farewell, young lords,  
Whether I live or die, be you the sons

Of worthy *French* men; let higher *Italy*,  
 (Those bated that inherit but the fall  
 Of the last monarchy) see that you come  
 Not to woo honour, but to wed it; when  
 The bravest questant shrinks, find what you seek,  
 That fame may cry you loud: I say, farewell.

2 *Lord*. Health at your bidding serve your majesty.

*King*. Those girls of *Italy*, take heed of them;  
 They say our *French* lack language to deny  
 If they demand: beware of being Captives  
 Before you serve.

*Both*. Our hearts receive your warnings.

*King*. Farewel. Come hither to me.

[To Bert.

[Exit.

1 *Lord*. Oh, my sweet lord, that you will stay behind  
 us.

*Par*. 'Tis not his fault, the spark —————

1 *Lord*. Oh, 'tis brave wars.

*Par*. Most admirable; I have seen those wars.

*Ber*. I am commanded here, and kept a coil with *Too*  
*young*, and *the next year*, and 'tis *too early*.

*Par*. And thy mind ————— stand too it, boy; steal  
 away bravely.

*Ber*. Shall I stay here the forehorse to a smock,  
 Creeking my shoes on the plain masonry,  
 'Till honour be brought up, and no sword worn  
 But one to dance with? by heav'n I'll steal away.

1 *Lord*. There's honour in the theft.

*Par*. Commit it, Count.

2 *Lord*. I am your accessory, and so, farewell.

*Ber*. I grow to you, and our parting is a tortur'd  
 body.

1 *Lord*. Farewel, captain.

2 *Lord*. Sweet Monsieur *Parollis*.

*Par*. Noble heroes. my sword and yours are kin;  
 good sparks and lustrous. A sword, good metals.  
 You shall find in the regiment of the *Spinii*, one cap-  
 tain *Spurio* his cicatrice, with an Emblem of war here  
 on his sinister cheek; it was this very sword entrench'd  
 it; say to him, I live, and observe his Reports of me.

1 *Lord*. We shall, noble captain.

*Par*.

*Par.* Mars doat on you for his novices ? what will ye do ?

*Ber.* Stay ; the King \_\_\_\_\_ [*Ex. Lords.*

*Par.* Use a more spacious ceremony to the noble lords, you have restrain'd your self within the list of too cold an adieu ; be more expressive to them, for they wear themselves in the cap of the time, there do muster true gate, eat, speak, and move under the influence of the most receiv'd star ; and tho' the devil lead the measure, such are to be follow'd : after them, and take a more dilated farewell.

*Ber.* And I will do so.

*Par.* Worthy fellows, and like to prove most finewy sword men. [*Exeunt.*

*Enter the King and Lafeu.*

*Laf.* Pardon, my lord, for me and for my tidings.

*King.* I'll see thee to stand up.

*Laf.* Then here's a man stands that hath brought his pardon.

I would you had kneel'd, my lord, to ask me mercy, And that at my bidding you could so stand up.

*King.* I would I had, so I had broke thy pate, And ask'd thee mercy for't.

*Laf.* Good faith acrofs ; but, my good lord, 'tis thus ; Will you be cur'd of your Infirmary ?

*King.* No.

*Laf.* O will you eat no grapes, my royal fox ; Yes, but you will, my noble grapes, and if My royal fox could reach them ; I have seen a Med'cine That's able to breath life into a stone, Quicken a rock, and make you dance canary With sprightly fire and motion, whose simple touch Is powerful to raise King *Pippen*, nay, To give great *Charlemain* a pen in's hand And write to her a love-line.

*King.* What her is this ?

*Laf.* Why doctor she : my lord, there's one arriv'd, If you will see her : now, by my faith and honour, If seriously I may convey my thoughts In this my light deliverance, I have spoke

With



With one, that in her sex, her years, profession,  
Wisdom and constancy, hath amaz'd me more  
Than I dare blame my weakness : will you see her,  
For that is her demand, and know her business?  
That done, laugh well at me.

*King.* Now, good *Lafcu*,  
Bring in the admiration, that we with thee  
May spend our wonder too, or take off thine,  
By wond'ring how thou took'st it.

*Laf.* Nay, I'll fit you,  
And not be all day neither.

*King.* Thus he his special nothing ever prologues.

*Laf.* Nay, come your ways. [*Bringing in Helena.*]

*King.* This hast hath wings indeed.

*Laf.* Nay, come your ways,  
This is his majesty, say your mind to him ;  
A Traitor you do look like, but such traitors  
His majesty seldom fears ; I'm *Cressid's* uncle  
That dare leave two together ; fare you well. [*Exit.*]

*King.* Now, fair one, do's your business follow us ?

*Hel.* Ay, my good lord.

*Gerard de Narbon* was my father,  
In what he did profess, well found.

*King.* I knew him.

*Hel.* The rather will I spare my praise tow'rd's him  
Knowing him is enough : on's bed of death  
Many Receipts he gave me, chiefly one,  
Which as the dearest issue of his practice,  
And of his old experience, th'only darling  
He bade me store up, as a triple eye,  
Safer than mine own two : more dear I have so ;  
And hearing your high majesty is touch'd  
With that malignant cause, wherein the honour  
Of my dear father's gift stands chief in power,  
I come to tender it, and my appliance,  
With all bound humbleness.

*King.* We thank you, maiden ;  
But may not be so credulous of cure,  
When our most learned doctors leave us, and  
The congregated college have concluded,

That labouring art can never ransom nature  
 From her unaidable estate : we must not  
 So stain our judgment, or corrupt our hope,  
 To prostitute our past-cure malady  
 To empericks, or to dissever so  
 Our great self and our credit, to esteem  
 A senseless help; when help past sense we deem.

*Hel.* My duty then shall pay me for my pains :  
 I will no more enforce my office on you,  
 Humbly intreating from your royal thoughts  
 A modest one to bear me back again.

*King.* I cannot give thee less, to be call'd grateful ;  
 Thou thought'st to help me, and such thanks I give,  
 As one near death to those that wish him live ;  
 But what at full I know, thou know'st no part,  
 I knowing all my peril, thou no art.

*Hel.* What I can do, can do no hurt to try,  
 Since you set up your rest 'gainst remedy :  
 He that of greatest works is finisher,  
 Oft does them by the weakest minister :  
 So holy writ, in babes hath judgment shown,  
 When judges have been babes ; great floods have flown  
 From simple sources ; and great seas have dry'd,  
 When miracles have by th' greatest been deny'd.  
 Oft expectation fails, and most oft there  
 Where most it promises : And oft it hits  
 Where hope is coldest, and despair most fits.

*King.* I must not hear thee ; fare thee well, kind  
 maid,  
 Thy pains not us'd, must by thy self be paid.  
 Proffers not took, reap thanks for their reward.

*Hel.* Inspir'd merit so by breath is bar'd :  
 It is not so with him that all things knows  
 As 'tis with us that square our guesses by shows :  
 But most it is presumption in us, when  
 The help of heav'n we count the act of men.  
 Dear Sir, to my endeavours give consent,  
 Of heav'n, not me, make an experiment.  
 I am not an impostor that proclaim  
 My self against the level of mine aim,

But know I think, and think I know most sure,  
My art is not past power, nor you past cure.

*King.* Art thou so confident? within what space  
Hop'st thou my cure?

*Hel.* The greatest lending grace,  
Ere twice the horses of the sun shall bring  
Their fiery torcher his diurnal ring.  
Ere twice in murk and occidental damp  
Moist *Hesperus* hath quench'd his sleepy lamp;  
Or four and twenty times the pilot's glass  
Hath told the thievish minutes how they pass,  
What is infirm from your sound parts shall fly,  
Health shall live free, and sickness freely die.

*King.* Upon thy certainty and confidence,  
What dar'st thou venture?

*Hel.* Tax of Impudence?  
A strumpet's boldness, a divulged shame  
Traduc'd by odious ballads; my maiden's name  
Sear'd otherwise, no worse of worst extended,  
With vilest torture let my life be ended.

*King.* Methinks in thee some blessed spirit doth  
speak

His powerful sound, within an organ weak;  
And what impossibility would slay  
In common sense, sense saves another way.  
Thy life is dear, for all that life can rate  
Worth name of life, in thee hath estimate:  
Youth, beauty, wisdom, courage all  
That happiness and prime can happy call;  
Then this to hazard, needs must intimate  
Skill infinite, or monstrous desperate.  
Sweet practiser, thy physick I will try,  
That ministers thine own death if I die.

*Hel.* If I break time, or flinch in property  
Of what I spoke, unpitied let me die,  
And well deserv'd; not helping, death's my fee;  
But if I help, what do you promise me?

*King.* Make thy demand.

*Hel.* But will you make it even?

*King.* Ay, by my scepter, and my hopes of help.

*Hel.*



*Hel.* Then shalt thou give me, with thy kingly hand,  
 What husband in thy power I will command.  
 Exempted be from me the arrogance  
 To chuse from forth the royal blood of *France*,  
 My low and humble name to propagate  
 With any branch or image of thy state:  
 But such a one thy vassal, whom I know  
 Is free for me to ask, thee to bestow.

*King.* Here is my hand, the premises observ'd,  
 Thy will by my performance shall be serv'd:  
 To make the choice of thine own time, for I,  
 Thy resolv'd patient, on thee still rely.  
 More should I question thee, and more I must,  
 Tho' more to know could not be more to trust:  
 From whence thou cam'st, how tend'ed on, but rest  
 Unquestion'd welcome, and undoubted blest.  
 Give me some help here, ho! if thou proceed  
 As high as word, my deed shall match thy deed. [*Ex.*]

*Enter Countess and Clown.*

*Count.* Come on, Sir, I shall now put you to the  
 eight of your breeding.

*Clown.* I will shew my self highly fed, and lowly  
 taught; I know my business is but to the court.

*Count.* To the court! why what place make you  
 special, when you put off that with such contempt?  
 but to the court!

*Cl.* Truly, madam, if God have lent a man any  
 manners he may easily put it off at court: he that  
 cannot make a leg, put off's cap, kiss his hand, and  
 say nothing, has neither leg, hands, lip, nor caps; and  
 indeed such a fellow, to say precisely, were not for  
 the court: but for me, I have an answer will serve all  
 men.

*Count.* Marry, that's a bountiful answer that fits all  
 questions.

*Cl.* It is like a barber's chair, that fits all buttocks;  
 the pin buttock, the quatch buttock, the brawn but-  
 teck, or any buttock.

*Count.* Will your answer serve fit to all questions?

*Cl.*

*Clo.* As fit as ten groats is for the hand of an attorney, as your *French* crown for your taffaty punk, as *Tib's* rush for *Tom's* fore-finger, as a pancake for *Shrove-Tuesday*, a morris for *May-day*, as the nail to his hole, the cuckold to his horn, as a scolding quean to a wrangling knave, as the nun's lip to the friar's mouth, nay, as the pudding to his skin.

*Count.* Have you, I say, an answer of such fitness for all questions?

*Clo.* From below your Duke, to beneath your constable, it will fit any question.

*Count.* It must be an answer of most monstrous size that must fit all demands.

*Clo.* But a trifle neither, in good faith, if the learned should speak truth of it: here it is, and all that belongs to't. Ask me if I am a courier, it shall do you no harm to learn.

*Count.* To be young again, if we could: I will be a fool in a question, hoping to be the wiser by your answer. I pray you, Sir, are you a courtier?

*Clo.* O lord, Sir—there's a simple putting off; more, more, a hundred of them.

*Count.* Sir, I am a poor friend of yours, that loves you.

*Clo.* O lord, Sir—thick, thick, spare not me.

*Count.* I think, Sir, you can eat none of this homely meat.

*Clo.* O lord, Sir—nay, put me to't, I warrant you.

*Count.* You were lately whipp'd, Sir, as I think.

*Clo.* O lord, Sir—spare not me.

*Count.* Do you cry, O lord, Sir, at your whipping, and spare not me? indeed, your O lord, Sir, is very frequent to your whipping: you would answer very well to a whipping if you were but bound to't.

*Clo.* I nev'r had worse luck in my life, in my O lord, Sir; I see things may serve long, and not serve ever.

*Count.* I play the noble huswife with the time, to entertain it to merrily with a fool.

*Clo.* O lord, Sir—why there't serves well again.

*Count.* An end, Sir; to your business; give *Helen* this,

And urge her to a present answer back.

Commend me to my kinsmen, and my son:

This is not much.

*Clo.* Not much commendation to them.

*Count.* Not much employment for you, you understand me.

*Clo.* Most fruitfully, I am there before my legs.

*Count.* Haste you again. [Exit.]

Enter *Bertram*, *Lafeu*, and *Parolles*.

*Laf.* They say miracles are past, and we have our philosophical persons to make modern and familiar things supernatural and causeless. Hence is it, that we make trifles of terrors, ensconcing our selves into seeming knowledge, when we should submit our selves to an unknown fear.

*Par.* Why 'tis the rarest argument of wonder that hath shot out in our latter times.

*Ber.* And so 'tis.

*Laf.* To be relinquish'd of the artists.

*Par.* So I say, both of *Galen* and *Paracelsus*.

*Laf.* Of all the learned and authentick fellows.

*Par.* Right, so I say.

*Laf.* That gave him out incurable.

*Par.* Why there 'tis, so say I too.

*Laf.* Not to be help'd.

*Par.* Right, as 'twere a man assur'd of an—

*Laf.* Uncertain life; and sure death.

*Par.* Just, you say well: so would I have said.

*Laf.* I may truly say, it is a novelty to the world.

*Par.* It is, indeed, if you will have it in shewing, you shall read it in what do you call there—

*Laf.* A shewing of a heav'nly effect in an earthly actor.

*Par.* That's it, I would have said the very same.

*Laf.* Why your dolphin is not lustier: for me, I speak in respect—

*Par.*

*Par.* Nay, 'tis strange, 'tis very strange, that is the brief and the tedious of it, and he's of a most facinorous spirit, that will not acknowledge it to be the——

*Laf.* Very hand of heav'n.

*Par.* Ay, so I say.

*Laf.* In a most weak——

*Par.* And debile minister, great power, great transcendence, which should, indeed, give us a further use to be made than only the recovery of the King, as to be——

*Laf.* Generally thankful.

*Enter King, Helena, and attendants.*

*Par.* I would have said it, you said well: here comes the King.

*Laf.* Lustick, as the *Dutchman* says: I'll like a maid the better while I have a tooth in my head: why he's able to lead her a corrant.

*Par.* *Mort du Vinagre*, is not this *Helen*?

*Laf.* 'Fore God, I think so,

*King.* Go call before me all the lords in court.

Sit, my preserver, by thy patient's side,  
And with this healthful hand, whose banish'd sense  
Thou hast repeal'd, a second time receive  
The confirmation of my promis'd gift,  
Which but attends thy naming.

*Enter three or four Lords.*

Fair maid, send forth thine eye; this youthful parcel  
Of noble batchelors stand at my bestowing,  
O'er whom both sov'reign power and father's voice  
I have to use; thy frank election make,  
Thou hast pow'r to chuse, and they none to forsake.

*Hel.* To each of you, one fair and virtuous mistress  
Fall, when love please: marry, to each but one.

*Laf.* I'd give bay curtal and his furniture,  
My mouth no more were broken than these boys,  
And writ as little beard.

*King.* Peruse them well:  
Not one of those, but had a noble father.



[*She addresses her self to a Lord.*]

*Hel.* Gentlemen, heav'n hath, through me, restor'd the King to health.

*All.* We understand it, and thank heav'n for you.

*Hel.* I am a simple maid, and therein wealthiest, That I protest I simply am a maid——

Please it your majesty, I have done already :

The blushes in my cheeks thus whisper me,

We blush that thou should'st chuse ; but be refus'd ;

Let the white death sit on thy cheek for ever,

We'll ne'er come there again.

*King.* Make choice and see

Who shuns thy love, shuns all his love in me.

*Hel.* Now *Dian* from thy altar do I fly,

And to imperial *Love*, that God most high,

Do my sighs stream : Sir, will you hear my suit ?

*1 Lord.* And grant it.

*Hel.* Thanks, Sir ; all the rest are mute.

*Laf.* I had rather be in this choice, than throw Ames-ace for my Life.

*Hel.* The honour, Sir, that flames in your fair eyes, Before I speak, too threatningly replies :

Love make your fortunes twenty times above

Her that so wishes, and her humble love.

*2 Lord.* No better, if you please.

*Hel.* My wish receive,

Which great *Love* grant, and so I take my leave.

*Laf.* Do all they deny her ? if they were sons of mine, I'd have them whipp'd, or I would send them to the *Turk* to make eunuchs of.

*Hel.* Be not afraid that I your hand should take,

I'll never do you wrong for your own sake :

Blessing upon your vows, and in your bed

Find fairer fortune, if you ever wed.

*Laf.* These boys are boys of ice, they'll none of her : sure they are bastards to the *English* ; the *French* ne'er got 'em.

*Hel.* You are too young, too happy, and too good To make your self a son out of my blood.

*4 Lord.* Fair one, I think not so.

*Laf.*

*Laf.* There's one grape yet, I am sure my father drunk wine; but if thou be't not an afs, I am a youth of fourteen: I have known thee already.

*Hel.* I dare not say I take you, but I give Me and my service, ever whilst I live, Into your guiding power: this is the man. [*To Bertram.*

*King.* Why then young *Bertram* take her, she's thy wife.

*Ber.* My wife, my liege! I shall besetch your highness

In such a business give me leave to use The help of mine own eyes.

*King.* Know't thou not, *Bertram*, What she hath done for me?

*Ber.* Yes, my good lord, But never hope to know why I should marry her.

*King.* Thou know't she rais'd me from my sickly bed.

*Ber.* But follows it, my lord, to bring me down Must answer for your raising? I know her well: She had her breeding at my father's charge: A poor physician's daughter, my wife! disdain Rather corrupt me ever.

*King.* 'Tis only title thou disdain'st in her, the which

I can build up: strange is it that our bloods Of colour, weight, and heat, pour'd all together, Would quite confound distinction; yet stand off In differences so mighty. If she be All that is virtuous, (save what thou dislike'st,) A poor physician's daughter, thou dislike'st, Of virtue for the name: but do not so. From lowest place, whence virtuous things proceed, The place is dignify'd by th' doer's deed. Where great addition swells, and virtue none, It is a drop'd honour; good alone, Is good without a name. Vileness is so: The property by what it is should go, Not by the title. She is young, wise, fair: In these, to nature she's immediate heir;

And these breed honour : That is honour's scorn,  
 Which challenges it self as honour's born,  
 And is not like the fire. Honours best thrive,  
 When rather from our acts we them derive  
 Than our for-goers : The meer Word's a slave  
 Debaucht on every tomb, on every grave ;  
 A lying trophy, and as oft is dumb,  
 Where dust and damn'd oblivion is the tomb,  
 Of honour'd bones indeed, what should be said ?  
 If thou canst like this creature as a maid,  
 I can create the rest : Virtue and she,  
 Is her own dow'r ; honour and wealth from me.

*Ber.* I cannot love her, nor will strive to do't.

*King.* Thou wrong'st thy self, if thou should'st strive  
 to chuse.

*Hel.* That you are well restor'd, my Lord, I'm glad :  
 Let the rest go.

*King.* My honour's at the stake, which to defeat  
 I must produce my power: Here, take her hand,  
 Proud, scornful boy, unworthy this good gift,  
 That dost in vile misprision shackle up  
 My love, and her desert ; that canst not dream,  
 We poizing us in her defective scale,  
 Shall weigh thee to the beam ; that wilt not know,  
 It is in us to plant thine honour where  
 We please to have it grow. Check thy contempt :  
 Obey our will, which travels in thy good,  
 Believe not thy disdain, but presently  
 Do thine own fortunes that obedient right  
 Which both thy duty owes, and our power claims :  
 Or I will throw thee from my care for ever  
 Into the staggers, and the careless lapse  
 Of youth and ignorance ; my revenge and hate  
 Let loose upon thee in the name of justice,  
 Without all terms of pity. Speak thine answer.

*Ber.* Pardon, my gracious lord ; for I submit  
 My fancy to your eyes. When I consider  
 What great creation, and what dole of honour  
 Flies where you bid : I find that she, which late  
 Was in my nobler thoughts most base, is now



The praised of the King ; who so ennobled,  
Is as 'twere born so.

*King.* Take her by the hand,  
And tell her she is thine : To whom I promise  
A counterpoize ; if not in thy estate,  
A balance more repleat.

*Ber.* I take her hand,

*King.* Good fortune, and the favour of the King  
Smile upon the contract ; whose ceremony  
Shall seem expedient on the now-born brief,  
And be perform'd to-night ; the solemn feast  
Shall more attend upon the coming space,  
Expecting absent friends. As thou lov'st her,  
Thy love's to me religious ; else does err. [*Exeunt.*

*Manent Parolles and Lafeu.*

*Laf.* Do you hear, Monsieur ? a word with you.

*Par.* Your pleasure, Sir.

*Laf.* Your lord and master did well to make his re-  
cantation.

*Par.* Recantation ! my lord ! my master !

*Laf.* Ay, is it not a language I speak ?

*Par.* A most harsh one, and not to be understood  
without bloody succeeding. My master !

*Laf.* Are you companion to the count *Rouffillon* ?

*Par.* To any count ; to all counts ; to what is man.

*Laf.* To what is count's man ; count's master is of a-  
nother stile.

*Par.* You are too old, Sir ; let it fatisfie you, you are  
too old.

*Laf.* I must tell thee, firrah, I write man ; to which  
title, age cannot bring thee.

*Par.* What I dare too well do, I dare not do.

*Laf.* I did think thee, for two ordinaries, to be a pretty  
wise fellow ; thou didst make tolerable vent of thy tra-  
vel, it might pass ; yet the scarfs and the bannerets a-  
bout thee did manifoldly dissuade me from believing  
thee a vessel of too great a burthen. I have now found  
thee ; when I lose thee again, I care not : Yet art thou

good for nothing but taking up, and that thou'rt scarce worth.

*Par.* Hadst thou not the privilege of antiquity upon thee——

*Laf.* Do not plunge thy self too far in anger, lest thou hasten thy tryal; which is, Lord have mercy on thee for a hen; so, my good window of lattice, fare thee well, thy casement I need not open, I look through thee. Give me thy hand.

*Par.* My lord, you give me most egregious indignity.

*Laf.* Ay, with all my heart, and thou art worthy of it.

*Par.* I have not, my lord, deserv'd it.

*Laf.* Yes, good faith, ev'ry dram of it; and I will not bate thee a scruple.

*Par.* Well, I shall be wiser——

*Laf.* Ev'n as soon as thou can't, for thou hast to pull at a smack o'th' contrary. If ever thou beest bound in thy scarf and beaten, thou shalt find what it is to be proud of thy bondage. I have a desire to hold my acquaintance with thee, or rather my knowledge, that I may say in the default, he is a man I know.

*Par.* My lord, you do me most insupportable vexation.

*Laf.* I would it were hell pains for thy sake, and my poor doing eternal: For doing I am past, as I will by thee, in what motion age will give me leave. [*Exit.*]

*Par.* Well, thou hast a son shall take this disgrace off me; scurvy, old, filthy, scurvy lord: Well, I must be patient, there is no fettering of authority. I'll beat him, by my life, if I can meet him with any convenience, an he were double and double a lord. I'll have no more pity of his age than I would have of—— I'll beat him; an if I could but meet him again.

*Enter Lafeu.*

*Laf.* Sirrah, your lord and master's married, there's news for you: You have a new mistress.

*Par.* I most unfeignedly beseech your lordship to make some reservation of your wrongs. He, my good lord, whom I serve above, is my master.

*Laf.*

*Laf.* Who? God?

*Par.* Ay, Sir.

*Laf.* The devil it is, that's thy master. Why dost thou garter up thy arms o' this fashion? dost make hose of thy sleeves? do other servants so? thou wert best set thy lower part where thy nose stands. By mine honour, if I were but two hours younger, I'd beat thee: Methinks thou art a general offence, and every man should beat thee. I think thou wast created for men to breathe themselves upon thee.

*Par.* This is hard and undeserved measure, my lord.

*Laf.* Go to, Sir; you were beaten in *Italy* for picking a kernel out of a pomegranate; you are a vagabond, and no true traveller: You are more sawcy with lords and honourable personages, than the commission of your birth and virtue gives you heraldry. You are not worth another word, else I'd call you knave. I leave you.

[*Exit.*

*Enter Bertram.*

*Par.* Good, very good, it is so then. Good, very good, let it be conceal'd a while.

*Ber.* Undone, and forfeited to cares for ever!

*Par.* What is the matter, sweet heart?

*Ber.* Although before the solemn Priest I've sworn; I will not bed her.

*Par.* What? what, sweet heart?

*Ber.* O my *Parolles*, they have married me: I'll to the *Tuscan* wars, and never bed her.

*Par.* *France* is a dog hole, and it no more merits the tread of a man's foot: To th' wars.

*Ber.* There's Letters from my mother; what the import is, I know not yet.

*Par.* Ay, that would be known: To th' wars my boy, to th' wars.

He wears his honour in a box unseen,  
That hugs his kickfy wickfy here at home,  
Spending his manly marrow in her arms,  
Which should sustain the bound and high curvet  
Of *Mars's* fiery steed: To other regions

*France* is a stable, we that dwell in't jades,  
'Therefore to th' war.

*Ber.* It shall be so, I'll send her to my house,  
Acquaint my mother with my hate to her,  
And wherefore I am fled ; write to the King  
'That which I durst not speak. His present gift  
Shall furnish me to those *Italian* fields  
Where noble fellows strike. War is no strife  
To the dark house, and the detested wife.

*Par.* Will this capricio hold in thee, art sure ?

*Ber.* Go with me to my chamber, and advise me.  
I'll send her straight away : To-morrow  
I'll to the wars, she to her single sorrow.

*Par.* Why these balls bound, there's noise in it.

'Tis hard

A young man married, is a man that's marr'd :  
Therefore away, and leave her bravely ; go,  
The King has done you wrong : But hush, 'tis so.

[*Exeunt*]

*Enter Helena and Clown.*

*Hel.* My mother greets me kindly, is she well ?

*Cl.* She is not well, but yet she has her health ; she's  
very merry, but yet she is not well : But thanks be  
given she's very well, and wants nothing i'th' world ;  
but yet she is not well.

*Hel.* If she be very well, what does she ail, that she's  
not very well ?

*Cl.* Truly she's very well, indeed, but for two things.

*Hel.* What two things ?

*Cl.* One, that she's not in heav'n, whither God send  
her quickly ; the other, that she's in earth, whence God  
send her quickly.

*Enter Parolles.*

*Par.* Bless you, my fortunate lady.

*Hel.* I hope, Sir, I have your good will to have mine  
own good fortune.

*Par.* You had my prayers to lead them on ; and to  
keep them on, have them still. O my knave, how does  
my



my old lady?

*Clo.* So that you had her wrinkles and I her mony, I would she did as you say.

*Par.* Why I say you nothing.

*Clo.* Marry, you are the wiser man; for many a man's tongue shakes out his master's undoing: To say nothing, to do nothing, to know nothing, to have nothing, is to be a great part of your title, which is within a very little of nothing.

*Par.* Away, thou'rt a knave.

*Clo.* You should have said, Sir, before a knave, th'art a knave; that's before me th'art a knave; This had been truth, Sir.

*Par.* Go to, thou art a witty fool, I have found thee.

*Clo.* Did you find me in your self, Sir? or were you taught to find me? the search, Sir, was profitable, and much fool may you find in you, even to the world's pleasure, and the encrease of laughter.

*Par.* A good knave i'faith, and well fed.

Madam, my lord will go away to-night,

A very ferious business call on him.

The great prerogative and rite of love,

Which, as your due time claims, he does acknowledge,

But puts it off by a compell'd restraint:

Whose want, and whose delay, is strew'd with sweets

Which they distil now in the curbed time,

To make the coming hour o'erflow with joy,

And pleasure drown the brim.

*Hel.* What's his will else?

*Par.* That you will take your instant leave o'th' King,

And make this haste as your own good proceeding,

Strengthen'd with what apology you think

May make it probable need.

*Hel.* What more commands he?

*Par.* That having this obtain'd, you presently

Attend his further pleasure.

*Hel.* In every thing I wait upon his will.

*Par.* I shall report it so.

[*Exit Par.*

*Hel.* I pray you come, Sirrah,

*Exc.*

*Enter*



*Enter Lafeu and Bertram,*

*Laf.* But I hope your lordship think not him a soldier.

*Bar.* Yes, my lord, and of very valiant approof.

*Laf.* You have it from his own deliverance.

*Ber.* And by other warranted testimony.

*Laf.* Then my dial goes not true, I took this lark for a bunting.

*Ber.* I do assure you, my lord, he is very great in knowledge, and accordingly valiant.

*Laf.* I have then sinned against his experience, and transgress'd against his valours, and my fate that way is dangerous, since I cannot yet find in my heart to repent: Here he comes, I pray you make us friends, I will pursue the amity.

*Enter Parolles*

*Par.* These things shall be done, Sir.

*Laf.* I pray you, Sir, who's his taylor?

*Par.* Sir?

*Laf.* O, I know him well, I, Sir, he fits a good workman, a very good taylor.

*Ber.* Is she gone to the King? [*Aside to Parolles.*

*Par.* She is.

*Ber.* Will she away to-night?

*Par.* As you'll have her.

*Ber.* I have writ my letters, casketed my treasure, given order for our horses; and to-night, when I should take possession of the bride ——— and ere I do begin ———

*Laf.* A good traveller is something at the latter end of a dinner; but one that lyes three thirds, and uses a known truth to pass a thousand nothings with, should be once heard and thrice beaten ——— God save you, captain.

*Ber.* Is there any unkindness between my lord and you, Monsieur?

*Par.* I know not how I have deserved to run into my lord's displeasure.

*Laf.*

*Laf.* You have made shift to run into't, boots and spurs, and all, like him that leapt into the custard; and out of it you'll run again, rather than suffer question for your residence.

*Ber.* It may be you have mistaken him, my lord.

*Laf.* And shall do so ever, tho' I took him, at's prayers. Fare you well, my lord, and believe this of me, there can be no kernel in this light nut: The soul of this man is his clothes. Trust him not in matter of heavy consequence: I have kept of them tame, and know their natures. Farewel, Monsieur, I have spoken better of you, than you have or will deserve at my hand, but we must do good against evil. [Exit.

*Par.* An idle lord, I swear.

*Ber.* I think so.

*Par.* Why, do you not know him?

*Ber.* Yes, I do know him well, and common speech gives him a worthy pass. Here comes my clog.

*Enter Helena.*

*Hel.* I have, Sir, as I was commanded from you, Spoke with the King, and have procur'd his leave For present parting; only he desires Some private speech with you.

*Ber.* I shall obey his will.  
You must not marvel, *Helena*, at my course,  
Which holds not colour with the time, nor does  
The ministrations and required office  
On my particular. Prepar'd I was not  
For such a business; and am therefore found  
So much unsettled: This drives me to intreat you,  
That presently you take your way for home,  
And rather muse than ask why I intreat you;  
For my respects are better than they seem,  
And my appointments have in them a need  
Greater than shews it self at the first view,  
To you that know them not. This to my mother.

[Giving a letter.

'Twill be two days ere I shall see you, so

I leave you to your wisdom.

*Hel.* Sir, I can nothing say,  
But that I your most obedient servant.

*Ber.* Come, come, no more of that.

*Hel.* And ever shall

With true observance seek to eke out that  
Wherein tow'rd me my homely stars have fail'd  
'To equal my great fortune.

*Ber.* Let that go :

My haste is very great. Farewel ; hie home

*Hel.* Pray, Sir, your pardon.

*Ber.* Well, what would you say ?

*Hel.* I am not worthy of the wealth I owe,  
Nor dare I say 'tis mine, and yet it is ?  
But, like a tim'rous thief, most fain would steal  
What law does vouch mine own.

*Ber.* What would you have ?

*Hel.* Something, and scarce so much ——— nothing in-  
deed ———

I would not tell you what I would, my lord ——— 'faith  
yes ———

Strangers and foes do funder, and not kifs.

*Ber.* I pray you stay not, but in haste to horse.

*Hel.* I shall not break your bidding, good my lord :  
Where are my other men ? Monsieur, farewel. [*Exit.*]

*Ber.* Go thou tow'rd home, where I will never come,  
Whilst I can shake my sword, or hear the drum :  
Away, and for our flight.

*Par.* Bravely, Couragio! [*Exeunt.*]



### A C T III.

*Flourish.* Enter the Duke of Florence, two French Lords,  
with Soldiers.

*Duke.* SO that from point to point now have you heard'  
The fundamental reasons of this war,  
Whose

Whose great decision hath much blood let forth,  
And more thirsts after.

1 *Lord.* Holy seems the quarrel  
Upon your grace's part ; but black and fearful  
On the opposer.

*Duke.* Therefore we marvel much, our cousin *France*  
Would, in so just a business, shut his bosom  
Against our borrowing prayers.

2 *Lord.* Good, my Lord,  
The reasons of our state I cannot yield,  
But like a common and an outward man,  
That the great figure of a council frames  
By self-unable motion, therefore dare not  
Say what I think of it, since I have found  
My self in my incertain grounds to fail  
As often as I guesst.

*Duke.* Be it his pleasure.

2 *Lord.* But I am sure the younger of our nation,  
That surfeit on their ease, will day by day  
Come here for physick.

*Duke.* Welcome shall they be :  
And all the honours that can fly from us,  
Shall on them settle. You know your places well.  
When better fall, for your avails they fell.  
To morrow to the field.

[*Exeunt.*]

*Enter Countess and Clown.*

*Count.* It has happen'd all as I would have had it,  
save that he comes not along with her.

*Cl.* By my troth, I take my young lord to be a very  
melancholy man.

*Count.* By what observance, I pray you ?

*Cl.* Why he will look upon his boot, and sing ;  
mend his ruff, and sing ; ask questions, and sing ; pick  
his teeth, and sing. I knew a man, that had this trick  
of melancholy, sold a goodly manor for a song.

*Count.* Let me see what he writes, and when the means  
to come.

*Cl.* I have no mind to *Isbels* since I was at court.  
Our old ling, and our *Isbel* o'th' country, are no-  
thing

thing like your old ling, and your *Isbels* o'th court :  
the brain of my *Cupid's* knock'd out, and I begin to  
love, as an old man loves money, with no stomach.

*Count.* What have we here ?

*Clo.* In that you have there.

[*Exit.*]

*Countess reads a letter.*

*I have sent you a daughter-in-law : she hath reco-  
vered the King, and undene me. I have wedded her,  
not bedded her ; and sworn to make the not eternal.  
You shall hear I am run away ; know it before the re-  
port come. If there be breadth enough in the world, I  
will hold a long distance. My duty to you.*

*Your unfortunate son,*

*Bertram.*

This is not well, rash and unbridled boy,  
To fly the favours of so good a King,  
To pluck his indignation on thy head,  
By the misprising of a maid, too virtuous  
For the contempt of empire.

*Enter Clown.*

*Clo.* O madam, yonder is heavy news within be-  
tween two foldiers and my young lady.

*Count.* What is the matter ?

*Clo.* Nay, there is some comfort in the news, some  
comfort, your son will not be kill'd so soon as I thought  
he would.

*Count.* Why should he be kill'd ?

*Clo.* So say I, madam, if he run away, as I hear  
he does ; the danger is in standing to't ; that's the loss  
of men, though it be the getting of children. Here  
they come will tell you more. For my part, I only  
hear your son was run away.

*Enter Helena and two Gentlemen.*

*1 Gen.* Save you, good madam.

*Hel.* Madam, my lord is gone, for ever gone.

*2 Gen.* Do not say so.

*Count.*



Count. Think upon patience : 'pray you, gentlemen,  
I've felt so many quirks of joy and grief,  
That the first face of neither on the start  
Can woman me unto't. Where is my son?

2 Gen. Madam, he's gone to serve the duke of  
Florence.

We met him thitherward, from thence we came ;  
And after some dispatch in hand at court,  
Thither we bend again.

Hel. Look on this letter, madam, here's my pas-  
port.

*When thou canst get the ring upon my finger, which  
never shall come off, and shew me a child begotten  
of thy body that I am father to, then call me hus-  
band: But in such a Then I write a Never.*

This is a dreadful sentence.

Count. Brought you this letter, gentlemen ?

1 Gen. Ay, madam, and, for the contents sake,  
are sorry for our pains.

Count. I pr'y thee, lady, have a better cheer,  
If thou engross'est all the griefs as thine,  
Thou robb'st me of a moiety : he was my son,  
But I do wash his name out of my blood,  
And thou art all my child. Towards Florence is he ?

2 Gen. Ay, madam.

Count. And to be a soldier ?

2 Gen. Such is his noble purpose ; and believe't  
The duke will lay upon him all the honour  
That good convenience claims.

Count. Return you thither ?

1 Gen. Ay, madam, with the swiftest wing of speed.

Hel. *Till I have no wife, I have nothing in France:*  
'Tis bitter. [Reading.

Count. Find you that there ?

Hel. Yes, madam.

1 Gen. 'Tis but the boldness of his hand happily  
which his heart was not consenting to.

Count. Nothing in France until we have no wife ?  
There's nothing here that is too good for him  
But only she, and she deserves a lord,

That

That twenty such rude boys might tend upon,  
And call her hourly mistress. Who was with him ?

1 *Gen.* A servant only, and a gentleman  
Which I have some time known.

*Count.* *Parolles*, was't not ?

1 *Gen.* Ay, my good lady, he.

*Count.* A very tainted fellow, full of wickedness :  
My son corrupts a well-derived nature  
With his inducement.

1 *Gen.* Indeed, good lady, the fellow has a deal of  
that too much, which holds him much to have.

*Count.* Y'are welcome, gentlemen ; I will intreat  
you, when you see my son, to tell him that his sword  
can never win the honour that he loses : more I'll in-  
treat you written to bear along.

2 *Gen.* We serve you, madam, in that and all your  
worthiest affairs.

*Count.* Not so, but as we change our courtesies.

Will you draw near ? [*Ex. Count. and Gentlemen.*]

Hel. 'Till I have no wife, I have nothing in France.

Nothing in France until he has no wife !

Thou shalt have none, *Roussillon*, none in France,

Then hast thou all again. Poor lord ! is't I

That chase thee from thy country, and expose

Those tender limbs of thine to the event

Of the none-sparing war ? and is it I,

That drive thee from the sportive court, where thou

Wast shot at with fair eyes, to be the mark

Of smoky muskets ? O you leaden messengers,

That ride upon the violent speed of fire,

Fly with false aim, move the still-piercing air

That sings with piercing, do not touch my lord :

Whoever shoots at him, I set him there.

Whoever charges on his forward breast,

I am the caitiff that do hold him to it ;

And tho' I kill him not, I am the cause

His death was so effected. Better 'twere

I met the rav'ning lion when he roar'd

With sharp constraint of hunger : better 'twere

That all the miseries which nature owes

Were

Were mine at once. No, come thou home, *Roussillon*,  
 Whence honour but of danger wins a scar,  
 As oft it loses all. I will be gone:  
 My being here it is that holds thee hence.  
 Shall I stay here to do't? no, no, although  
 The air of paradise did fan the house,  
 And angels offic'd all; I will be gone,  
 That pitiful rumour may report my flight  
 To console thine ear. Come night and day,  
 For with the dark, poor thief, I'll steal away. [*Exit.*]

*Flourish.* Enter the Duke of Florence, Bertram, drums  
 and trumpets, soldiers, Parolles.

*Duke.* The general of our horse thou art, and we  
 Great in our hope, lay our best love and credence  
 Upon thy promising fortune.

*Ber.* Sir, it is

A charge too heavy for my strength; but yet  
 We'll strive to bear it for your worthy sake,  
 To th' extream edge of hazard.

*Duke.* Then go forth,  
 And fortune play upon thy prosp'rous helm,  
 As thy auspicious mistress.

*Ber.* This very day,  
 Great *Mars*, I put my self into thy file;  
 Make be but like my thoughts, and I shall prove  
 A lover of thy drum; hater of love. [*Exitant.*]

Enter Countess and Steward.

*Count.* Alas! and would you take the letter of her?  
 Might you not know she would do, as she has done,  
 By sending me a letter? Read it again.

### L E T T E R.

*I am St. Jaques' pilgrim, thither gone;  
 Ambitious love hath so in me offended,  
 That bare-foot plod I the cold ground upon,  
 With fainted vow my faults to have amended.  
 Write, write, that from the bloody course of war,  
 My dearest master, your dear son, may live;*

*Bless him at home in peace, whilst I from far  
 His name with zealous fervour sanctifie.  
 His taken labours bid him me forgive ;  
 I his despightful Juno sent him forth  
 From courtly friends, with camping foes to live,  
 Where death and danger dog the heels of worth.  
 He is too good and fair for death and me,  
 Whom I my self embrace, to set him free.*

Ah, what sharp stings are in her mildest words ?  
*Rynaldo*, you did never lack advice so much,  
 As letting her pass so ; had I spoke with her,  
 I could have well diverted her intents,  
 Which thus she hath prevented.

*Stew.* Pardon, madam,  
 If I had given you this at over-night  
 She might have been o'er-ta'en ; and yet she writes  
 Pursuit would be but vain.

*Count.* What angel shall  
 Bless this unworthy husband ? he cannot thrive,  
 Unless her prayers, whom heav'n delights to hear,  
 And loves to grant, reprieve him from the wrath  
 Of greatest justice. Write, write, *Rynaldo*,  
 To this unworthy husband of his wife ;  
 Let every word weigh heavy of her worth,  
 That he does weigh too light : my greatest grief,  
 Tho' little do he feel it, set down sharply.  
 Dispatch the most convenient messenger ;  
 When haply he shall hear that she is gone,  
 He will return, and hope I may that she,  
 Hearing so much, will speed her foot again,  
 Led hither by pure love. Which of them both,  
 Is dearest to me, I've no skill in sense  
 To make distinction ; provide this messenger ;  
 My heart is heavy, and mine age is weak,  
 Grief would have tears, and sorrow bids me speak.

*Enter an old widow of Florence, Diana, Violenta, and,  
 Mariana with other Citizens.*

*Wid.* Nay, come. For if they do approach the city,  
 We

we shall lose all the fight.

*Dia.* They say the *French* Count has done most honourable service.

*Wid.* It is reported that he has ta'en their greatest commander, and that with his own hand he slew the Duke's brother. We have lost our labour, they are gone a contrary way: hark, you may know by their trumpets.

*Mar.* Come, let's return again, and suffice our selves with the report of it. Well, *Diana*, take heed of this *French* Earl; the honour of a maid is her name, and no legacy is so rich as honesty.

*Wid.* I have told my neighbour how you have been solicited by a gentleman his companion.

*Mar.* I know that knave, hang him, one *Parolles*, a filthy officer, he is in those suggestions for the young, Earl; beware of them, *Diana*; their promises, enticements, oaths, tokens, and all these engines of lust are not the things they go under; many a maid hath been seduced by them, and the misery is, example, that so terrible shews in the wreck of maiden-hood, cannot for all that dissuade succession, but that they are limed with the twigs that threaten them. I hope I need not to advise you further, but I hope your own grace will keep you where you are, tho' there were no further danger known, but the modesty which is so lost.

*Dia.* You shall not need to fear me.

*Enter Helena disguised like a Pilgrim.*

*Wid.* I hope so. Look here comes a pilgrim; I know she will lye at my house; thither they send one another; I'll question her: God save you pilgrim, whither are you bound?

*Hel.* To *S. Jacques le grand*. Where do the palmers lodge, I do beseech you?

*Wid.* At the *St Francis* here beside the port.

*Hel.* Is this the way?

[*A march afar off.*]

*Wid.* Ay, marry is't. Hark you, they come this way.

If



If you will tarry, holy pilgrim, but 'till the troops  
come by,

I will conduct you where you shall be lodg'd;

The rather, for I think I know your hostels

As ample as my self.

*Hel.* Is it your self?

*Wid.* If you shall please so, pilgrim.

*Hel.* I thank you, and will stay upon your leisure.

*Wid.* You came, I think, from *France*?

*Hel.* I did so.

*Wid.* Here you shall see a country-man of yours,  
That has done worthy service.

*Hel.* His name, I pray you?

*Dia.* The Count *Riufillon*: know you such a one?

*Hel.* But by the ear that hears most nobly of him;  
His face I know not,

*Dia.* Whatsoe'er he is,  
He's bravely taken here. He stole from *France*,  
As 'tis reported; for the King had married him  
Against his liking. Think you it is so?

*Hel.* Ay surely, meer the truth, I know his lady.

*Dia.* There is a gentleman that serves the Count  
Reports but courfely of her.

*Hel.* What's his name?

*Dia.* Monsieur *Parolles*.

*Hel.* Oh I believe with him,  
In argument of praise, or to the worth  
Of the great Count himself, she is too mean  
To have her name repeated; all her deserving  
Is a reserved honesty, and that  
I have not heard examin'd.

*Dia.* Ah, poor lady!

'Tis a hard bondage to become the wife  
Of a detesting lord.

*Wid.* Ah! right good creature! wheresoe'er she is,  
Her heart weighs sadly; this young maid might do her  
A shrewd turn, if she pleas'd.

*Hel.* How do you mean?

May be, the am'rous Count sollicitates her  
In the unlawful purpose.

*Wid.* He does indeed,  
And brokes with all than can in such a suit  
Corrupt the tender honour of a maid :  
But she is arm'd for him, and keeps her guard  
In honestest defence.

*Enter Bertram, Parolles, Officers and Soldiers attending.*

*Mar.* The Gods forbid else.

*Wid.* So now they come :

That is *Antonio*, the Duke's eldest son ;

That *Escalus*.

*Hel.* Which is the *Frenchman* ?

*Dia.* He ;

That with the plume ; 'tis a most gallant fellow,  
I would he lov'd his wife : if he were honest  
He were much goodlier. Is't not a handsome gentle-  
man ?

*Hel.* I like him well.

*Dia.* 'Tis pity he is not honest ; yond's that same  
knave

That leads him to these places ; were I his lady,  
I'd poison that vile rascal.

*Hel.* Which is he ?

*Dia.* That jack-an-apes with scarfs. Why is he me-  
lancholy ?

*Hel.* Perchance he's hurt i'th battel.

*Par.* Lose our drum ! well.

*Mar.* He's shrewdly vex'd at something. Look he  
has spied us.

*Wid.* Marry, hang you. [*Exeunt Ber. Par. &c.*]

*Mar.* And your curtesie, for a ring-carrier.

*Wid.* The troop is past : come pilgrim ; I will bring  
you

Where you shall host : of injoyn'd penitents  
There's four or five, to great St. *Jaques* bound,  
Already at my house.

*Hel.* I humbly thank you :

Please it this matron, and this gentle maid  
To eat with us to-night, the charge and thanking  
Shall be for me : and to requite you further,

I will bestow some precepts on this virgin  
Worthy the note.

*Both.* We'll take your offer kindly. [*Exeunt.*]

*Enter Bertram and the two French Lords.*

*1 Lord.* Nay, good my lord, put to him to't : let him have his way.

*2 Lord.* If your lordship find him not a hilding, hold me no more in your respect.

*1 Lord.* On my life, my lord, a bubble.

*Ber.* Do you think I am so far deceiv'd in him.

*1 Lord.* Believe it, my lord, in mine own direct knowledge, without any malice, but to speak of him as my kinsman ; he's a most notable coward and, infinite and endless liar, an hourly promise-breaker, the owner of no one good quality worthy your lordship's entertainment.

*2 Lord.* It were fit you knew him, lest reposing too far in his virtue, which he hath not, he might at some great and trusty business in a main danger fail you.

*Ber.* I would I knew in what particular action to try him.

*2 Lord.* None better than to let him fetch off his drum ; which you hear him so confidently undertake to do.

*1 Lord.* I, with a troop of *Florentines*, will suddenly surprize him ; such I will have, whom I am sure he knows not from the enemy : we will bind and hood-wink him so that he shall suppose no other but that he is carried into the leaguer of the adversaries, when we bring him to our own tents ; be but your lordship present at his examination, if he do not for the promise of his life, and the highest compulsion of base fear, offer to betray you, and deliver all the intelligence in his power against you, and that with the divine forfeit of his soul upon oath, never trust my judgment in any thing.

*2 Lord.* O, for the love of laughter, let him fetch his drum ; he says he has a stratagem for't ; when

your lordship sees the bottom of his success in't, and to what metal this counterfeit lump of ours will be melted, if you give him not *John Drum's* entertainment, your inclining cannot be removed. Here he comes.

*Enter Parolles.*

1 *Lord.* O, for the love of laughter, hinder not the honour of his design, let him fetch off his drum in any hand.

*Ber.* How now, monsieur? this drum sticks sorely in your disposition,

2 *Lord.* A pox on't, let it go, 'tis but a drum.

*Par.* But a drum! is't but a drum? a drum so lost! there was excellent command! to charge in with our horse upon our own wings, and to rend our own soldiers.

2 *Lord.* That was not to be blamed in the command of the service; it was a disaster of war that *Cæsar* himself could not have prevented, if he had been there to command.

*Ber.* Well, we cannot greatly condemn our success: some dishonour we had in the loss of that drum, but it is not to be recover'd.

*Par.* It might have been recover'd.

*Ber.* It might, but it is not now.

*Par.* It is to be recover'd; but that the merit of service is seldom attributed to the true and exact performer, I would have that drum or another, or *hic jacet*.

*Ber.* Why, if thou have a stomach to't, Monsieur; if you think your mystery in stratagem can bring this instrument of honour again into his native quarter, be magnanimous in the enterprise, and go on, I will grace the attempt for a worthy exploit: if you speed well in it, the duke shall both speak of it, and extend to you what further becomes his greatness, even to the utmost syllable of your worthiness.

*Par.* By the hand of a soldier I will undertake it.

*Ber.* But you must not now slumber in it.

*Par.* I'll about it this evening, and I will presently pen down my dilemma's, encourage my self in my certainty, put my self into my mortal preparation; and by midnight look to hear further from me.

*Ber.* May I be bold to acquaint his Grace you are gone about it?

*Par.* I know not what the success will be, my lord; but the attempt, I vow.

*Ber.* I know th'art valiant, and to the possibility of thy soldiership, will subscribe for thee; farewell.

*Par.* I love not many words. [Exit.

1 *Lord.* No more than a fish loves water. Is not this a strange fellow, my lord, that so confidently seems to undertake this business, which he knows is not to be done; damns himself to do it, and dares better be damn'd than do't?

2 *Lord.* You do not know him, my lord, as we do; certain it is, that he will steal himself into a man's favour, and for a week escape a great deal of discoveries; but when you find him out, you have him ever after.

*Ber.* Why do you think he will make no deed at all of this that so seriously he does address himself unto?

2 *Lord.* None in the world, but return with an invention, and clap upon you two or three probable lies; but we have almost imboss'd him, you shall see his fall to-night; for indeed he is not for your lordship's respect.

1 *Lord.* We'll make you some sport with the fox ere we catch him. He was first smock'd by the old lord *Lafew*; when his disguise and he is parted, tell me what a sprat you shall find him, which you shall see this very night.

2 *Lord.* I must go and look my twigs; he shall be caught.

*Ber.* Your brother he shall go along with me.

2 *Lord.* As't please your lordship. I'll leave you.

*Ber.* Now will I lead you to the house, and shew you.



The laſt I ſpoke of.

*Lord.* But you ſay ſhe's honeſt.

*Ber.* That's all the fault: I ſpoke with her but once,  
And found her wondrous cold; but I ſent to her,  
By this ſame coxcomb that we have i'th' wind,  
Tokens and letters, which ſhe did reſend;  
And this is all I've done: ſhe's a fair creature;  
Will you go ſee her?

*Lord.* With all my heart, my Lord. [Exeunt.]

*Enter Helena and Widow.*

*Hel.* If you miſdoubt me that I am not ſhe,  
I know not how I ſhall aſſure you further.  
But I ſhall loſe the grounds I work upon.

*Wid.* Tho' my eſtate be fallen, I was well born,  
Nothing acquainted with theſe buſineſſes,  
And would not put my reputation now  
In any ſtaining act.

*Hel.* Nor would I wiſh you.  
Firſt give me truſt, the Count he is my huſband,  
And what to your ſworn counſel I have ſpoken,  
Is ſo from word to word; and then you cannot,  
By the good aid that I of you ſhall borrow,  
Err in beſtowing it.

*Wid.* I ſhould believe you,  
For you have ſhew'd me that which well approves  
Y'are great in fortune.

*Hel.* Take this purſe of gold,  
And let me buy your friendly help thus far.  
Which I will over-pay and pay again  
When I have found it. The Count wooes your  
daughter,

Lays down his wanton ſiege before her beauty,  
Reſolves to carry her; let her conſent,  
As we'll direct her how 'tis beſt to bear it.  
Now his importunate blood will nought deny  
That ſhe'll demand: a ring the Count does wear  
That downward hath ſucceeded in his houſe  
From ſon to ſon, ſome four or five deſcents,  
Since the firſt father wore it, This rings he holds

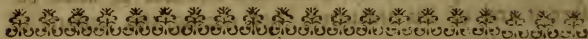
In most rich choice ; yet in his idle fire,  
To buy his will, it would not seem too dear,  
Howe'er repented after.

*Wid.* Now I see the bottom of your purpose.

*Hel.* You see it lawful then. It is no more,  
But that your daughter, ere she seems as won,  
Desires this ring ; appoints him an encounter ;  
In fine, delivers me to fill the time,  
Her self most chasteely absent : after this,  
To marry her, I'll add three thousand crowns  
To what is past already

*Wid.* I have yielded :  
Instruct my daughter how she shall persever,  
That time and place, with this deceit so lawful,  
May prove coherent. Every night he comes  
With musick of all forts, and songs compos'd  
To her unworthiness : it nothing steads us  
To chide him from our eyes, for he persists,  
As if his life lay on't.

*Hel.* Why then to-night  
Let us assay our plot, which if it speed,  
Is wicked meaning in a lawful deed ;  
And lawful meaning in a lawful act,  
Where both not sin, and yet a sinful fact.  
But let's about it.



## A C T IV. S C E N E I.

*Continues in Florence.*

*Enter one of the French Lords, with five or six Soldiers  
in ambush*

*Lord.* **H**E can come no other way but by this hedge-  
corner ; when you fall upon him, speak  
what terrible language you will, though you understand  
it not your selves, no matter ; for we must not seem to  
understand him, unless some one amongst us, whom we  
must produce for an interpreter.

*Sol.*

*Sol.* Good captain, let me be th' interpreter.

*Lord.* Art not acquainted with him? knows he not thy voice?

*Sol.* No, Sir, I warrant you.

*Lord.* But what linfie-woolfie hast thou to speak to us again?

*Sol.* Ev'n such as you speak to me.

*Lord.* He must think us some band of strangers i'th' adversaries entertainment. Now he hath a smack of all neighbouring languages; therefore we must every one be a man of his own fancy, not to know what we speak one to another; so we seem to know is to know straight our purpose: cough's language, gabble enough, and good enough. As for you, interpreter, you must seem very politick. But cough, ho, here he comes, to beguile two hours in a sleep, and then to return and swear the lies he forges.

*Enter Parolles.*

*Par.* Ten a clock; within these three hours 'twill be time enough to go home. What shall I say I have done? it must be a very plausible invention that carries it. They begin to smock me, and disgraces have of late knock'd too often at my door; I find my tongue is too fool-hardy, but my heart hath the fear of *Mars* before it and of his creatures, not daring the reports of my tongue.

*Lord.* This is the first truth that e'er thine own tongue was guilty of. [*Aside.*]

*Par.* What the devil should move me to undertake the recovery of this drum, being not ignorant of the impossibility, and knowing I had no such purpose? I must give my self some hurts, and say, I got them in exploit; yet slight ones will not carry it. They will say, came you off with so little? and great ones I dare not give; wherefore what's the instance? tongue, I must put you into a butter-woman's mouth, and buy my self another of *Bajazet's* mule, if you prattle me into these perils.

*Lord.* Is it possible she should know what he is, and he that he is? [*Aside.*]

*Par.* I would the cutting of my garments would serve the turn, or the breaking of my *Spanish* sword.

*Lord.* We cannot afford you so. [*Aside.*]

*Par.* Or the baring of my beard, and to say it was in stratagem.

*Lord.* 'Twould not do. [*Aside.*]

*Par.* Or to drown my cloaths, and say I was stript.

*Lord.* Hardly serve. [*Aside.*]

*Par.* Though I swore I leap'd from the window of the citadel.

*Lord.* How deep? [*Aside.*]

*Par.* Thirty fathom.

*Lord.* Three great oaths would scarce make that be believed. [*Aside.*]

*Par.* I would I had any drum of the enemies, I would swear I recover'd it.

*Lord.* You shall hear one anon. [*Aside.*]

*Par.* A drum now of the enemies. [*Alarum within.*]

*Lord.* *Throco movousus, cargo, cargo, cargo,*

*All.* *Cargo, cargo, villiando par corbo, cargo.*

*Par.* O ransom, ransom: do not hide mine eyes.

[*They seize him and blindfold him.*]

*Inter.* *Baskos thromaldo beskos.*

*Par.* I know you are the *Muskos* regiment,  
And I shall lose my life for want of language.  
If there be here *German*, or *Dane*, low *Dutch*,  
*Italian*, or *French*, let him speak to me,  
I'll discover that which shall undo the *Florentine*.

*Inter.* *Baskos vauvado*, I understand thee, and can speak thy tongue, *Kerelybonto*, Sir, betake thee to thy faith, for seventeen poniards are at thy bosom.

*Par.* Oh!

*Int.* Oh! pray, pray, pray,  
*Mancha ravancha dulce.*

*Lord.* *Osceoribi dulchos volivorco*

*Int.* The general is content to spare thee yet,  
And, hood-winkt as thou art, will lead thee on  
To gather from thee. Haply thou may'st inform

Something



Something to save thy life.

*Par.* Oh let me live,  
And all the secrets of our camp I'll shew;  
Their force, their purposes: nay, I'll speak that  
Which you will wonder at.

*Int.* But wilt thou faithfully?

*Par.* If I do not, damn me.

*Int.* *Acordo linta.*

Come on, thou art granted space. [Exit.]

[A short alarm within.]

*Lord.* Go, tell the Count *Rouffillon* and my brother,  
We've caught the woodcock, and will keep him  
muffled

'Till we do hear from them.

*Sol.* Captain, I will.

*Lord.* He will betray us all unto our selves,  
Inform 'em that.

*Sol.* So I will, Sir.

*Lord.* 'Till then I'll keep him dark and safely lockt  
[Exit.]

*Enter Bertram and Diana.*

*Ber.* They told me that your name was *Fontibell*.

*Dia.* No, my good lord, *Diana*.

*Ber.* Titled goddess,

And worth it with addition! but, fair soul,  
In your fine frame hath love no quality?  
If the quick fire of youth light not your mind,  
You are no maiden, but a monument:  
When you are dead you should be such a one  
As you are now, for you are cold and stern;  
And now you should be as your mother was  
When your sweet self was got.

*Dia.* She then was honest.

*Ber.* So should you be.

*Dia.* No.

My mother did but duty, such, my lord,  
As you owe to your wife.

*Ber.* No more o' that;

I pr'ythee do not strive against my vows:



I was compell'd to her, - but I love thee  
By love's own sweet constraint, and will for ever  
Do thee all rights of service.

*Dia.* Ay, so you serve us  
'Till we serve you: But when you have our roses,  
You barely leave our thorns to prick our selves,  
And mock us with our bareness.

*Ber.* How have I sworn!

*Dia.* 'Tis not the many oaths that make the truth,  
But the plain single vow that is vow'd true;  
What is not holy that we swear not by.  
But take the high'st to witness: Then pray tell me,  
If I should swear by *Jove's* great attribute  
I lov'd you dearly, would you believe my oaths,  
When I did love you ill? this has no holding  
To swear by him whom I protest to love,  
That I will work against him. Therefore your oaths  
Are words, and poor conditions but unseal'd,  
At least in opinion.

*Ber.* Change it, change it:  
Be not so holy cruel. Love is holy,  
And my integrity ne'er knew the crafts  
That you do charge men with: Stand no more off,  
But give thy self unto my sick desires,  
Which then recover. Say thou art mine, and ever  
My love, as it begins, shall so persevere.

*Dia.* I see that men make hopes in such affairs  
That we'll forsake our selves. Give me that ring.

*Ber.* I'll lend it thee, my dear, but have no power  
To give it from me.

*Dia.* Will you not, my lord?

*Ber.* It is an honour 'longing to our house,  
Bequeathed down from many ancestors,  
Which were the greatest obloquy i'th' world  
In me to lose.

*Dia.* Mine honour's such a ring,  
My chastity's the jewel of our house,  
Bequeathed down from many ancestors.  
Which were the greatest obloquy i'th' world  
In me to lose. Thus your own proper wisdom

Brings

Brings in the champion honour on my part,  
Against your vain assault.

*Ber.* Here, take my ring,  
My house, my honour, yea, my life be thine,  
And I'll be bid by thee.

*Dia.* When midnight comes, knock at my chamber  
window ;

I'll order take, my mother shall not hear.  
Now will I charge you in the band of truth,  
When you have conquer'd my yet maiden-bed,  
Remain there but an hour, nor speak to me :  
My reasons are most strong, and you shall know them  
When back again this ring shall be deliver'd ;  
And on your finger, in the night, I'll put  
Another ring, that, what in time proceeds,  
May token to the future our past deeds.  
Adieu 'till then, then fail not : You have won  
A wife of me, tho' there my hope be done.

*Ber.* A heav'n on earth I've won by wooing thee.

[*Exit.*

*Dia.* For which live long to thank both heav'n and me.  
You may so in the end.

My mother told me just how he would woo,  
As if she fate in's heart ; she says, all men  
Have the like oaths : He had sworn to marry me  
When his wife's dead : Therefore I'll lye with him  
When I am buried. Since *Frenchmen* are so braid,  
Marry that will, I'll live and die a maid ;  
Only in this disguise, I think't no sin  
To cozen him that would unjustly win.

[*Exit.*

*Enter the two French Lords, and two or three Soldiers.*

1 *Lord.* You have not given him his mother's letter ?

2 *Lord.* I have deliver'd it an hour since ; there is  
something in't that stings his nature, for on the reading  
it he chang'd almost into another man.

1 *Lord.* He has much worthy blame laid upon him  
for shaking off so good a wife and so sweet a lady.

2 *Lord.* Especially he hath incurred the everlasting  
displeasure of the King, who had even tun'd his bounty

to sing happiness to him. I will tell you a thing, but you shall let it dwell darkly with you.

1 *Lord.* When you have spoken it, 'tis dead, and I am the grave of it.

2 *Lord.* He hath perverted a young gentlewoman here in *Florence*, of a most chaste renown, and this night he fleishes his will in the spoil of her honour; he hath given her his monumental ring, and thinks himself made in the unchast composition.

1 *Lord.* Now God delay our rebellion; as we are ourselves, what things are we!

2 *Lord.* Meerly our own traitors; and as in the common course of all treasons, we still see them reveal themselves, 'till they attain to their abhor'd ends; so he that in this action contrives against his own nobility in his proper stream, o'erflows himself.

1 *Lord.* Is it not meant damnable in us to be the trumpeters of our unlawful intents? we shall not then have his company to-night?

2 *Lord.* Not 'till after midnight; for he is dieted to his hour.

1 *Lord.* That approaches apace: I would gladly have him see his company anatomiz'd, that he might take a measure of his own judgment, wherein so curiously he had set his counterfeit.

2 *Lord.* We will not meddle with him 'till he come: for his presence must be the whip of the other.

1 *Lord.* In the mean time, what hear you of these wars?

2 *Lord.* I hear there is an overture of peace.

1 *Lord.* Nay, I assure you a peace concluded.

2 *Lord.* What will count *Rouffillon* do then? will he travel higher, or return again into *France*?

1 *Lord.* I perceive by this demand, you are not altogether of his council.

2 *Lord.* Let it be forbid, Sir, so should I be a great deal of his act.

1 *Lord.* Sir, his wife some two months since fled from his house, her pretence is a pilgrimage to *St. Jaques le grand*; which holy undertaking, with a most austere sanctimony,

sanctimony, she accomplish'd; and there residing, the tenderness of her nature became as a prey to her grief; in fine, made a groan of her last breath, and now she sings in heaven.

2 *Lord.* How is this justified?

1 *Lord.* The stronger part of it by her own letters, which makes her story true, even to the point of her death; her death it self (which could not be her office to say is come) was faithfully confirm'd by the rector of the place.

2. *Lord.* Hath the Count all this intelligence?

1 *Lord.* Ay, and the particular confirmations, point from point, to the full arming of the verity.

2 *Lord.* I am heartily sorry that he'll be glad of this.

1 *Lord.* How mightily sometimes we make us comforts of our losses!

2 *Lord.* And how mightily some other times we drown our gain in tears! the great dignity that his valour hath here acquired for him, shall at home be encounter'd with a shame as ample.

1 *Lord.* The web of our life is of a mingled yarn, good and ill together: Our virtues would be proud if our faults whipt them not; and our crimes would despair if they were not cherish'd by our virtues.

*Enter a Servant.*

How now? where's your master?

*Ser.* He met the Duke in the street, Sir, of whom he hath taken a solemn leave: His lordship will next morning for *France*. The Duke hath offered him letters of commendations to the King.

2 *Lord.* They shall be no more than needful there, if they were more than they can commend.

*Enter Bertram.*

1 *Lord.* They cannot be too sweet for the King's tartness: Here's his lordship now. How now, my lord, is't not after midnight?

*Ber.* I have to-night dispatch'd sixteen businesses, a month's length a-piece, by an abstract of success; I have congied



congi'd with the Duke, done my adieu with his neariest ; buried a wife, mourn'd for her ; writ to my lady mother, I am returning ; entertain'd my convey ; and between these main parcels of dispatch, effected many nicer needs : The last was the greatest, but that I have not ended yet.

2 *Lord.* If the business be of any difficulty, and this morning your departure hence, it requires haste of your lordship.

*Ber.* I mean the business is not ended, as fearing to hear of it hereafter. But shall we have this dialogue between the fool and the soldier ? come, bring forth this counterfeit module ; h'as deceiv'd me, like a double-meaning prophet.

2 *Lord.* Bring him forth ; h'as fate in the stocks all night, poor gallant knave.

*Ber.* No matter, his heels have deserv'd it in usurping his spurs so long. How does he carry himself ?

1 *Lord.* I have told your lordship already : The stocks carry him. But to answer you as you would be understood, he weeps like a wench that had shed her milk, he hath confess'd himself to *Morgan*, whom he supposes to be a friar, from the time of his remembrance to this very instant disaster of his setting i'th' stocks ; and what think you he hath confess'd ?

*Ber.* Nothing of me, has he ?

2 *Lord.* His confession is taken, and it shall be read to his face ; if your lordship be in't, as I believe you are, you must have the patience to hear it.

*Enter Parolles with his interpreter.*

*Ber.* A plague upon him, muffled ! he can say nothing of me ; hush.

1 *Lord.* Hoodman comes : *Portotartarossa.*

*Par.* He calls for the tortures ; what will you say without ?

*Par.* I will confess what I know without constraint ; if ye pinch me like a pasty, I can say no more.

*Int.* *Bosko Chimurcho.*

2 *Lord.* *Biblibindo chicurmarco.*

*Int.*



*Int.* You are a merciful general: Our general bids you answer to what I shall ask you out of a note.

*Par.* And truly, as I hope to live.

*Int.* First demand of him, how many horse the Duke is strong. What say you to that?

*Par.* Five or six thousand, but very weak and un-serviceable; the troops are all scatter'd, and the commanders very poor rogues, upon my reputation and credit, and as I hope to live.

*Int.* Shall I set down your answer so?

*Par.* Do, I'll take the sacrament on't, how and which way you will: All's one to me.

*Ber.* What a past-saving slave is this?

1 *Lord.* Y'are deceiv'd, my Lord, this is Monsieur *Parolles*, the gallant militarist, that was his own phrase, that had the whole theory of war in the knot of his scarf, and the practice in the chape of his dagger.

2 *Lord.* I will never trust a man again for keeping his sword clean, nor believe he can have every thing in him by wearing his apparel neatly.

*Int.* Well, that's set down.

*Par.* Five or six thousand horse I said, I will say true, or thereabouts set down, for I'll speak truth.

1 *Lord.* He's very near the truth in this.

*Ber.* But I con him no thanks for't, in the nature he delivers it.

*Par.* Poor rogues, I pray you say.

*Int.* Well, that's set down.

*Par.* I humbly thank you, Sir, a truth's a truth, the rogues are marvellous poor.

*Int.* Demand of him of what strength they are afoot. What say you to that?

*Par.* By my troth, Sir, if I were to live this present hour I will tell true. Let me see, *Spurio* a hundred and fifty, *Sebastian* so many, *Corambus* so many, *Jagu* so many; *Guiltian*, *Cosmo*, *Lodowick*, and *Gratii*, two hundred and fifty each; mine own company, *Chitopher*, *Vaumont*, *Bentii*, two hundred and fifty each; so that the muster file, rotten and sound, upon my life, amounts not to fifteen thousand pole, half of the which dare not

flake

shake the snow from off their cassock, lest they shake themselves to pieces.

*Ber.* What shall be done to him ?

1 *Lord.* Nothing, but let him have thanks. Demand of him my conditions, and what credit I have with the Duke.

*Int.* Well, that's set down. You shall demand of him, whether one captain *Dumain* be i'th camp, a *Frenchman*; what his reputation is with the Duke, what his valour, honesty, and expertness in war; or, whether he thinks it were not possible with well-weighing fums of gold to corrupt him to revolt. What say you to this? what do you know of it?

*Par.* I beseech you let me answer to the particular of the Interrogatories. Demand them singly.

*Int.* Do you know this captain *Dumain*?

*Par.* I know him, he was a butcher's prentice in *Paris*, from whence he was whipt for getting the sheriff's fool with child, a dumb innocent, that could not say him nay.

*Ber.* Nay, by your leave hold your hands, tho' I know his brains are forfeit to the next tile that falls.

*Int.* Well, is this captain in the Duke of *Florence's* camp?

*Par.* Upon my knowledge he is, and lowsie.

1 *Lord.* Nay, look not to upon me, we shall hear of your lordship anon.

*Int.* What is his reputation with the Duke?

*Par.* The Duke knows him for no other but a poor officer of mine, and writ to me the other day to turn him out o'th' band. I think I have his letter in my pocket.

*Int.* Marry, we'll search.

*Par.* In good sadness I do not know, either it is there, or it is upon the file with the Duke's other letters in my tent.

*Int.* Here 'tis, here's a paper, shall I read it to you?

*Par.* I do not know if it be it or no.

*Ber.* Our interpreter does it well.

2 *Lord.* Excellently.

*Int.* Dian; *the Count's a fool, and full of gold.*

*Par.*

*Par.* That is not the Duke's letter, Sir; that is, an advertisement to a proper maid in *Florence*, one *Diana*, to take heed of the allurement of one Count *Rouffillon*, a foolish idle boy, but for all that very ruttish. I pray you, Sir, put it up again.

*Int.* Nay, I'll read it first, by your favour.

*Par.* My meaning in't, I protest, was very honest in the behalf of the maid; for I knew the young Count to be a dangerous and lascivious boy, who is a whale to virginity, and devours up all the fry it finds.

*Ber.* Damnable! both sides rogue.

*Interpreter reads the letter.*

*When he swears oaths, bid him drop gold, and take it.*

*After he scores, he never pays the score:*

*Half won is match well made, match and well make it:*

*He ne'er pays after-debts, take it before.*

*And say a soldier (Dian) told thee this:*

*Men are to mell with, boys are but to kiss.*

*For count of this, the Count's a fool, I know it.*

*Who pays before, but not when he does owe it.*

Thine, as he vow'd to thee in thine ear,

PAROLLES.

*Ber.* He shall be whipt through the army with this rhyme in his forehead.

*2 Lord.* This is your devoted friend, Sir, the manifold linguist, and the arm-potent soldier.

*Ber.* I could endure any thing before but a cat, and now he's a cat to me.

*Int.* I perceive, Sir, by the general's looks, we shall be fain to hang you.

*Par.* My life, Sir, in any case; not that I am afraid to die, but that my offences being many, I would repent out the remainder of nature. Let me live, Sir, in a dungeon, i'th' stocks, any where, so I may live.

*Int.* We'll see what may be done, so you confess freely; therefore once more to this captain *Dumain*: You have

have answer'd to his reputation with the Duke, and to his valour. What is his honesty?

*Par.* He will steal, Sir, an egg out of a cloister: For rapes and ravishments he parallels *Nessus*. He professes not keeping of oaths; in breaking them he is stronger than *Hercules*. He will lie, Sir, with such volubility, that you would think truth were a fool: Drunkenness is his best virtue, for he will be swine-drunk, and in his sleep he does little harm, save to his bed-cloaths about him; but they know his conditions, and lay him in straw. I have but little more to say, Sir, of his honesty, he has every thing that an honest man should not have; what an honest man should have, he has nothing.

*1 Lord.* I begin to love him for this.

*Ber.* For this description of thine honesty? a pox upon him for me, he is more and more a cat.

*Int.* What say you to his expertness in war?

*Par.* Faith, Sir, h'as led the drum before the *English* tragedians: To belie him I will not, and more of his soldiership I know not, except in that country, he had the honour to be the officer at a place there call'd *Mile-end*, to instruct for the doubling of files. I would do the man what honour I can, but of this I am not certain.

*1 Lord.* He hath out-villain'd villainy so far that the rarity redeems him.

*Ber.* A pox on him, he's a cat still.

*Int.* His qualities being at this poor price, I need not to ask you if gold will corrupt him to revolt.

*Par.* Sir, for a *Quart-d'ecu* he will sell the fee-simple of his salvation, the inheritance of it, and cut th'intail from all remainders, and a perpetual succession for it perpetually.

*Int.* What's his brother, the other captain *Dumain*?

*2 Lord.* Why does he ask him of me?

*Int.* What's he?

*Par.* E'en a crow 'oth' same nest; not altogether so great as the first in goodness, but greater a great deal in evil. He excels his brother for a coward, yet his brother



brother is reputed one of the best that is. In a retreat he out-runs any lackey ; marry, in coming on he has the cramp.

*Int.* If your life be saved, will you undertake to betray the *Florentine* ?

*Par.* Ay, and the captain of his horse, Count *Foufillon*.

*Int.* I'll whisper with the general and know his pleasure.

*Par.* I'll no more drumming, a plague of all drums ; only to seem to deserve well, and to beguile the supposition of that lascivious young boy the Count, have I run into danger ; yet who would have suspected an ambush where I was taken ? [*Aside.*]

*Int.* There is no remedy, Sir, but you must die ; the general says, you that have so traitorously discovered the secrets of your army, and made such pestiferous reports of men very nobly held, can serve the world for no honest use ; therefore you must die. Come, headsman, off with his head.

*Par.* O lord, Sir, let me live, or let me see my death.

*Int.* That shall you, and take your leave of all your friends. [*Unbinding him.*]

So, look about you ; know you any here ?

*Ber.* Good morrow, noble captain.

*2 Lord.* God bless you, captain *Parolles*.

*1 Lord.* God save you, noble captain.

*2 Lord.* Captain, what greeting will you to my Lord *Lafeu* ? I am for *France*.

*1 Lord.* Good captain, will you give me a copy of that same sonnet you writ to *Diana* in behalf of the Count *Roufillon* ? if I were not a very coward, I'd compel it of you ; but fare you well. [*Exeunt.*]

*Int.* You are undone, captain, all but your scarf, that has a knot on't yet.

*Par.* Who cannot be crush'd with a plot ?

*Int.* If you could find out a country where but women were that had receiv'd so much shame, you might begin

begin



begin an impudent nation. Fare you well, Sir, I am for *France* too, we shall speak of you there. [Exit.]

*Par.* Yet I am thankful: If my heart were great,  
'Twould burst at this. Captain, I'll be no more,  
But I will eat and drink, and sleep as soft  
As captain shall. Simply the thing I am  
Shall make me live: Who knows himself a braggart,  
Let him fear this; for it will come to pass,  
'That every braggart shall be found an ass.  
Rust sword, cool blushes, and *Parolles* live  
Safest in shame; being fool'd by fool'ry thrive;  
There's place and means for every man alive.  
I'll after them. [Exit.]

[Enter *Helena, Widow, and Diana.*]

*Hel.* That you may well perceive I have not wrong'd  
you,  
One of the greatest in the christian world  
Shall be my surety; 'fore whose throne 'tis needful,  
Ere I can perfect mine intents, to kneel.  
Time was I did him a desired office  
Dear almost as his life, which gratitude  
Through flinty *Tartars* bosom would peep forth,  
And answer thanks. I duly am inform'd,  
His Grace is at *Marseilles*, to which place  
We have convenient convoy; you must know  
I am supposed dead; the army breaking,  
My husband hies him home, where heaven aiding  
And by the leave of my good lord the King,  
We'll be before our welcome.

*Wid.* Gentle madam,  
You never had a servant to whose trust  
Your business was more welcome.

*Hel.* Nor you, mistress,  
Ever a friend, whose thoughts more truly labour  
To recompence your love: Doubt not but heav'n  
Hath brought me up to your daughter's dowre,  
As it hath fated her to be my motive  
And helper to a husband. But, O strange men!  
'That can such sweet use make of what they hate,  
When saucy trusting of the cozen'd thoughts

Defiles

Defiles the pitchy night, so lust doth play  
With what it loaths, for that which is away.  
But more of this hereafter. You *Diana*,  
Under my poor instructions yet must suffer  
Something in my behalf.

*Dia.* Let death and honesty  
Go with your impositions, I am yours  
Upon your will to suffer.

*Hel.* Yet I pray you :  
But with the word the time will bring on summer,  
When briars shall have leaves as well as thorns,  
And be as sweet as sharp : We must away,  
Our waggon is prepar'd, and time revives us ;  
*All's well that ends well*, still that finds the crown ;  
Whate'er the course, the end is the renown. [Exeunt.]

*Enter Countess, Lafeu, and Clown.*

*Laf.* No, no, no, your son was misled with a snip  
taffata fellow there, whose villainous saffron would  
have made all the unbak'd and dowy youth of a na-  
tion in his colour. Your daughter-in-law had been alive  
at this hour, and your son here at home more ad-  
vanc'd by the King than by that red-tail'd humble-bee  
I speak of.

*Count.* I would I had not known him, it was the  
death of the most virtuous gentlewoman that ever na-  
ture had praise for creating ; if she had partaken of my  
flesh, and cost me the dearest groans of a mother, I  
could not have owed her a more rooted love.

*Laf.* 'Twas a good lady, 'twas a good lady. We  
may pick a thousand sallets ere we light on such another  
herb.

*Clow.* Indeed, Sir, she was the sweet marjoram of the  
sallet, or rather the herb of grace.

*Laf.* They are not sallet-herbs, you knave, they are  
nose-herbs.

*Clow.* I am no great *Nebuchadnezzar*, Sir, I have not  
much skill in grafs.

*Laf.* Whether dost thou profess thy self, a knave or  
a fool ?

*Clow.*

*Clo.* A fool, Sir, at a Womans Service, and a knave at a man's.

*Laf.* Your distinction ?

*Clo.* I could cozen the man of his wife, and do his service.

*Laf.* So you were a knave at his Service indeed.

*Clo.* And I would give his Wife my bauble, Sir, to do her service.

*Laf.* I will subscribe for thee, thou art both knave and fool.

*Clo.* At your service.

*Laf.* No, no, no.

*Clo.* Why, Sir, if I cannot serve you, I can serve as great a Prince as you are.

*Laf.* Who's that, a *Frenchman* ?

*Clo.* Faith, Sir, he has an *English* name, out his phisnomy is more hotter in *France* than there.

*Laf.* What prince is that ?

*Clo.* The black Prince, Sir, *alias*, the Prince of darkness, *alias* the devil.

*Laf.* Hold thee, there's my purse ; I give thee not this to seduce thee from thy master thou talk'it of, serve him still.

*Clo.* I'm a woodland fellow, Sir, that always lov'd a great fire, and the master I speak of ever keeps a good fire, but sure he is the Prince of the World, let his nobility remain in's court. I am for the house with the narrow gate, which I take to be too little for pomp to enter : some that humble themselves may, but the many will be too chill and tender, and they'll be for the flowry way that leads to the broad gate and the great fire.

*Laf.* Go thy ways, I begin to be a weary of thee, and I tell thee so before, because I would not fall out with thee. Go thy ways, let my horses be well look'd to, without any tricks.

*Clo.* If I put any tricks upon 'em, they shall be jades tricks: which are their own right by the law of nature. [Exit.

*Laf.* A shrew'd knave, and an unhappy.

*Count.* So he is. My lord that's gone, made himself

self much sport out of him ; by his authority he remains here, which he thinks is a patent for his favours; and indeed he has no pace, but runs where he will.

*Laf.* I like him well, 'tis not amiss; and I was about to tell you, since I heard of the good lady's death, and that my lord your son was upon his return home, I mov'd the King my master to speak in the behalf of my daughter; which in the minority of them both, his Majesty, out of a self-gracious remembrance, did first propose; his Highness hath promis'd me to do it; and to stop up the displeasure he hath conceiv'd against your son, there is no fitter matter. How do's your ladyship like it?

*Count.* With very much content, my lord, and I wish it happily effected.

*Laf.* His Highness comes post from *Marseilles*, of as able a body as when he number'd thirty; he will be here to-morrow, or I am deceiv'd by him that in such intelligence hath seldom fail'd.

*Count.* It rejoices me that I hope I shall see him ere I die. I have letters that my son will be here to-night: I shall beseech your lordship to remain with me 'till they meet together.

*Laf.* Madam, I was thinking with what manners I might safely be admitted.

*Count.* You need but plead your honourable privilege.

*Laf.* Lady, of that I have made a bold charter; but I thank my God it holds yet.

*Enter Clown.*

*Clo.* O madam, yonder's my lord your son, with a patch of velvet on's face; whether there be a scar under't or no the velvet knows, but 'tis a goodly patch of velvet; his left cheek is a cheek of two pile and a half, but his right cheek is worn bare.

*Count.* A scar nobly got, or a noble scar, is a good livery of honour. So belike is that.

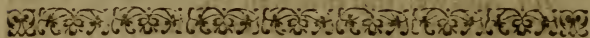
*Clo.* But it is your carbinado'd face.

*Laf.*



*Laf.* Let us go see your Son, I pray you: I long to talk with the young noble foldier.

*Clo.* 'Faith, there's a dozen of 'em with delicate fine hats and most courteous feathers, which bow the head, and nod at every man. [*Exeunt.*



## A C T V.

*Enter Helena, Widow, and Diana, with two attendants.*

*Helena.* **B**UT this exceeding posting day and night  
Must wear your spirits low; we cannot help  
it.

But since you've made the days and nights as one  
To wear your gentle limbs in my affairs,  
Be bold, you do so grow in my requital  
As nothing can unroot you. In happy time.

*Enter a Gentleman.*

This man may help me to his Majesty's ear,  
If he would spend his power. God save you, Sir,  
*Gent.* And you.

*Hel.* Sir, I have seen you in the court of France

*Gent.* I have been sometimes there.

*Hel.* I do presume, Sir, that you are not fallen  
From the report that goes upon your goodness;  
And therefore goaded with most sharp occasions;  
Which lay nice manners by, I put you to  
The use of your own virtues, for the which  
I shall continue thankful.

*Gent.* What's your will?

*Hel.* That it will please you  
To give this poor petition to the King,  
And aid me with that store of power you have,  
To come into his presence.

*Gent.*



*Gent.* The King's not here.

*Hel.* Not here, Sir!

*Gent.* Not, indeed.

He hence remov'd last night, and with more haste  
Than is his use.

*Wid.* Lord, how we lose our pains!

*Hel.* All's well that ends well yet,  
Tho' time seem so adverse, and means unfit:  
I do beseech you, whither is he gone?

*Gent.* Marry, as I take it, to *Rouffillon*,  
Whither I'm going.

*Hel.* I beseech you, Sir,  
Since you are like to see the King before me,  
Commend the paper to his gracious hand,  
Which, I presume, shall render you no blame,  
But rather make you thank your pains for it.  
I will come after you with what good speed  
Our means will make us means.

*Gent.* This I'll do for you.

*Hel.* And you shall find yourself to be well thank'd  
What-e'er falls more. We must to horse again.  
Go, go, provide. [*Exeunt*

*Enter Clown and Parolles.*

*Par.* Good Mr. *Le-watch*, give my lord *Lafeu* this letter.  
I have ere now, Sir, been better known to you, when I  
have held familiarity with fresher cloaths; but I am  
now, Sir, muddied in fortunes mood, and smell some-  
what strong of her strong displeasure.

*Cl.* Truly fortune's displeasure is but fluttish, if it  
smell so strongly as thou speak'st of: I will hence-  
forth eat no fish of Fortune's butt'ring. Pry'thee, al-  
low the wind.

*Par.* Nay, you need not to stop your nose, Sir; I  
spake but by a metaphor.

*Cl.* Indeed, Sir, if your metaphor stink, I will  
stop my nose against any man's metaphor. Pry'thee get  
thee further.

*Par.* Pray you, Sir, deliver me this paper.

*Cl.* Foh! pry'thee stand away; a paper from for-  
tune's

tune's close-stool, to give to a nobleman! look here he comes himself.

*Enter Lafeu.*

*Clo.* Here is a pur of fortunes, Sir, or of fortune's cat (but not a muscat;) that hath fall'n into an unclean fishpond of her displeasure, and, as he says, is muddied withal. Pray you, Sir, use the carp as you may, for he looks like a poor, decayed, ingenious, foolish, rascally knave. I do pity his distress in my smiles of comfort, and leave him to your lordship.

*Par.* My lord, I am a man whom fortune hath cruelly scratch'd.

*Laf.* And what would you have me to do? 'tis too late to pare her nails now. Wherein have you play'd the knave with fortune, that she should scratch you, who of her self is a good lady, and would not have knavesthrive longer under her? there's a *Quart d'ecu* for you: let the justices make you and fortune friends; I am for other business.

*Par.* I beseech your -honour to hear me one single word.

*Laf.* You beg a single penny more: come you shall ha't, save your word.

*Par.* My name, my good lord, is *Parolles*.

*Laf.* You beg more than one word then. Cox my passion, give me your hand: how does your drum?

*Par.* O my good lord, you were the first that found me.

*Laf.* Was I, insooth? and I was the first that lost thee.

*Par.* It lies in you, my lord, to bring me in some grace, for you did bring me out.

*Laf.* Out upon the knave, dost thou put upon me at once both the office of God and the devil? one brings thee in grace, and the other brings thee out. The Kings coming, I know by his trumpets. Sirrah, inquire further after me, I had talk of you last night; tho' you are a fool and a knave, you shall eat; go to, follow.

*Par.*

*Par.* I praise God for you.

[*Exeunt.*

*Flourish.* Enter King, Countess, Lafeu, the two French Lords, with attendants.

*King.* We lost a jewel of her, our esteem  
Was made much poorer by it ; but your son,  
As mad in folly, lack'd the sense to know  
Her estimation home.

*Count.* 'Tis past, my Liege ;  
And I beseech your Majesty to make it  
Natural Rebellion, done i'th' blade of youth,  
When oil and fire, too strong for reason's force,  
O'rbears it, and burns on.

*King.* My honour'd lady,  
I have forgiven and forgotten all ;  
Tho' my revenges were high bent upon him,  
And watch'd the time to shoot.

*Laf.* This I must say,  
But first I beg my pardon ; the young lord  
Did to his majesty, his mother, and his lady,  
Offence of mighty note ; but to himself  
The greatest wrong of all. He lost a wife,  
Whose beauty did astonish the survey  
Of richest eyes ; whose words all ears took captive ;  
Whose dear perfection, hearts that scorn'd to serve,  
Humbly call'd mistress.

*King.* Praising what is lost,  
Makes the remembrance dear. Well—call him hither,  
We're reconcil'd, and the first view shall kill  
All repetition : let him not ask our pardon.  
The nature of his great offence is dead,  
And deeper than oblivion we do bury  
Th' incensing relics of it. Let him approach  
A stranger, no offender : and inform him  
So 'tis our will he should.

*Gent.* I shall, my Liege.

*King.* What says he to your daughter ?  
Have you spoke ?

*Laf.* All that he is hath reference to your Highness.

*King.* Then shall we have a match. I have letters  
sent me.

That sent high in fame.

*Enter Bertram.*

*Laf.* He looks well on't.

*King.* I'm not a day of season,  
For thou may'st see a sun-shine and a hail  
In me at once; but to the brightest beams  
Distracted clouds give way, so stand thou forth,  
The time is fair again.

*Ber.* My high-repented blames,  
Dear Sovereign, pardon to me.

*King.* All is whole,  
Not one word more of the consumed time,  
Let's take the instant by the forward top;  
For we are old, and on our quick'st decrees  
Th' inaudible and noiseless foot of time,  
Steals, ere we can effect them. You remember  
The daughter of this lord?

*Ber.* Admiringly, my liege. At first  
I stuck my choice upon her, ere my heart  
Durst make too bold a herald of my tongue:  
Where the impression of mine eye enfixing,  
Contempt his scornful perspective did lend me,  
Which warp'd the line of every other favour,  
Scorn'd a fair colour, or express'd it stoll'n,  
Extended or contracted all proportions  
To a most hedious object: thence it came,  
That she, whom all men prais'd, and whom my self,  
Since I have lost, have lov'd, was in mine eye  
The dust that did offend it.

*King.* Well excus'd:  
That thou did'st love her, strikes some scores away  
From the great 'compt; but love that comes too late,  
Like a remorseful pardon slowly carried,  
To the great sencer, turns a sower offence;  
Crying, that's good that is gone: our rash faults  
Make trivial price of serious things we have,  
Not knowing them, until we know their grave;  
Oft our displeasures to our selves unjust,  
Destroy our Friends, and after weep their dust:



Our own love waking, cries to see what's done,  
 While shameful hate sleeps out the afternoon.  
 Be this sweet *Helen's* knell, and now forget her.  
 Send forth your amorous token for fair *Maudlin*,  
 The main consents are had, and here we'll stay  
 To see our widower's second marriage day :  
 Which better than the first, O dear heav'n blefs,  
 Or, ere they meet, in me, O nature, cease.

*Laf.* Come on my son, in whom my house's name  
 Must be digested : give a favour from you  
 To sparkle in the spirits of my daughter,  
 That she may quickly come. By my old beard,  
 And ev'ry hair that's on't, *Helen* that's dead  
 Was a sweet creature : such a ring as this,  
 The last that e'er she took her leave at court,  
 I saw upon her finger.

*Ber.* Her's it was not.

*King.* Now pray you let me see it. For mine eye,  
 While I was speaking, oft was fasten'd to't :  
 This ring was mine, and when I gave it *Helen*,  
 I bad her, if her fortunes ever stood  
 Necessited to help, that by this token  
 I would relieve her. Had you that craft to reave her  
 Of what should stead her most ?

*Ber.* My gracious soveraign,  
 Howe'er it pleases you to take it so,  
 The ring was never her's.

*Count.* Son, on my life  
 I've seen her wear it, and she reckon'd it  
 At her life's rate.

*Laf.* I'm sure I saw her wear it.

*Ber.* You are deceiv'd, my lord, she never saw it ;  
 In *Florence* was it from a casement thrown me,  
 Wrap'd in a paper, which contain'd the name  
 Of her that threw it : noble she was, and thought  
 I stood engag'd, but when I had subscrib'd  
 To mine own fortune, and inform'd her fully,  
 I could not answer in that course of honour  
 As she had made the overture, she ceast



In heavy satisfaction, and would never  
Receive the ring again.

*King.* *Plutus* himself,  
That knows the tinct and multiplying medicine,  
Hath not in nature's mystery more sciene,  
Than I have in this ring. 'Twas mine, 'twas *Helen's*,  
Whoever gave it you: then if you know  
That you are well acquainted with your self,  
Confess 'twas hers, and by what rough enforcement  
You got it from her. She call'd the fain'ts to surety,  
That she would never put it from her finger,  
Unless she gave it to your self in bed,  
(Where you have never come) or sent it us  
Upon her great disaster.

*Ber.* She never saw it.

*King.* Thou speak'st it falsely, as I love mine honour;  
And mak'st conject'ral fears to come into me,  
Which I would fain shut out; if it should prove  
That thou art so inhuman—'twill not prove so—  
And yet I know not—thou didst hate her deadly,  
And she is dead, which nothing but to close  
Her eyes my self, could win me to believe,  
More than to see this ring. Take him away.

[*Guards seize Bertram.*

My fore-past proofs, howe'er the matter fall,  
Shall tax my fears of little vanity,  
Having vainly fear'd too little. Away with him,  
We'll sift this matter further.

*Ber.* If you shall prove  
This ring was ever hers, you shall as easie  
Prove that I husbanded her bed in *Florence*,  
Where yet she never was. [*Exit Bertram guarded.*

*Enter a Gentleman.*

*King.* I am wrap'd in dismal thinking.

*Gent.* Gracious sovereign,  
Whether I've been to blame or no, I know not:  
Here's a petition from a *Florentine*.  
Who hath for four or five removes come short  
To tender it her self. I undertook it,  
Vanquish'd thereto by the fair grace and speech

Of the poor suppliant, who by this I know  
Is here attending : her business looks in her  
With an importuning visage, and she told me  
In a sweet verbal brief, it did concern  
Your highness with her self.

The King reads a letter.

*Upon his many protestations to marry me, when his wife was dead, I blush to say it, he won me. Now is the Count Roufillon a widower, his vows are forfeited to me, and my honour's paid to him. He stole from Florence, taking no leave, and I follow him to this country for justice : grant it me, O King, in you it best lyes, otherwise a seducer flourishes, and a poor maid is undone.*

Diana Capulet.

*Laf.* I will buy me a son-in-law in a fair, and toll for this. I'll none of him.

*King.* The heavens have thought well on thee, *Lafeu,*  
To bring forth this discov'ry. Seek these suitors :  
Go speedily, and bring again the Count.

*Enter Bertram.*

I am afraid the life of *Helen* (lady)  
Was foully snatch'd.

*Count.* Now justice on the doers.

*King.* I wonder, Sir, wives are so monstrous to you,  
And that you fly them as you swear to them ;  
Yet you desire to wed. What woman's that !

*Enter Widow and Diana.*

*Dia.* I am, my lord, a wretched *Florentine,*  
Derived from the antient *Capulet* ;  
My suit, as I do understand, you know,  
And therefore know how far I may be pitied.

*Wid.* I am her mother, Sir, whose age and honour  
Both suffer under this complaint we bring,  
And both shall cease without your remedy.

*King.* Come hither, Count ; do you know these women ?

*Ber.*

*Ber.* My lord, I neither can nor will deny  
But that I know them; do they charge me further?

*Dia.* Why do you look so strange upon your wife?

*Ber.* She's none of mine, my lord.

*Dia.* If you shall marry,  
You give away this hand, and that is mine;  
You give away heav'n's vows, and those are mine;  
You give away my self, which is known mine;  
For I by vow am so embodied yours,  
'That she which marries you must marry me,  
Either both or none.

*Laf.* Your reputation comes too short for my daughter,  
you are no husband for her. [To Bertram.

*Ber.* My lord, this is a fond and desperate creature,  
Whom sometime I have laugh'd with: Let your high-  
ness

Lay a more noble thought upon mine honour  
Than e'er to think that I would sink it here.

*King.* Sir, for my thoughts, you have them ill to  
friend,

'Till your deeds gain them fairer: prove your honour.  
Than in my thought it lies.

*Dia.* Good my lord,  
Ask him upon his oath, if he does think  
He had not my virginity.

*King.* What say'st thou to her?

*Ber.* She's impudent, my lord,  
And was a common gamester to the camp.

*Dia.* He does me wrong, my lord; if I were so  
He might have bought me at a common price.  
Do not believe him. O behold this ring,  
Whose high respect and rich validity  
Did lack a parallel: Yet for all that  
He gave it to a commoner o'th' camp,  
If I be one.

*Count.* He blushes, and 'tis his:  
Of six preceding ancestors, that gemm  
Conferr'd by testament to the subsequent issue,  
Hath it been ow'd and worn. This is his wife,  
'That ring's a thousand proofs.

*King.* Methought you said  
You saw one here in court could witness it.

*Dia.* I did, my lord, but loth am to produce  
So bad an instrument; his name's *Parolles*,

*Laf.* I saw the man to-day, if man he be.

*King.* Find him, and bring him hither.

*Ber.* What of him?

He's quoted for a most perfidious slave,  
With all the spots o'th' world, tax'd and debosh'd,  
Which nature sickens with: But to speak truth,  
Am I or that, or this, for what he'll utter,  
That will speak any thing?

*King.* She hath that ring of yours.

*Ber.* I think she has; certain it is I lik'd her,  
And boarded her i'th' wanton way of youth:  
She knew her distance, and did angle for me,  
Madding my eagerness with her restraint;  
As all impediments in fancy's course  
Are motives of more fancy, and in fine,  
Her insuit coming with her modern grace,  
Subdu'd me to her rate: She got the ring,  
And I had that which any inferior might  
At market-price have bought.

*Dia.* I must be patient:  
You that turn'd off a first so noble wife,  
May justly diet me. I pray you yet,  
Since you lack virtue, I will lose a husband,  
Send for your ring, I will return it home,  
And give me mine again.

*Ber.* I have it not.

*King.* What ring was yours, I pray you?

*Dia.* Sir, much like the same upon your finger.

*King.* Know you this ring, this ring was his of late.

*Dia.* And this was it I gave him, being a-bed.

*King.* The story then goes false, you threw it him  
Out of a casement,

*Dia.* I have spoke the truth.

*Enter Parolles.*

*Ber.* My lord, I do confess the ring was hers.

*King.*



*King.* You boggle shrewdly, every feather starts you :  
Is this the man you speak of ?

*Dia.* It is, my lord.

*King.* Tell me, firrah, but tell me true, I charge you,  
Not fearing the displeasure of your master,  
Which on your just proceeding I'll keep off ;  
By him and by this woman here, what know you ?

*Par.* So please your Majesty, my master, hath been  
an honourable gentleman. Tricks he hath had in him,  
which gentlemen have.

*King.* Come, come, to the purpose ; did he love this  
woman ?

*Par.* 'Faith, Sir, he did love her, but how !

*King.* How, I pray you ?

*Par.* He did love her, Sir, as a gentleman loves a  
woman.

*King.* How is that ?

*Par.* He lov'd her, Sir, and lov'd her not.

*King.* As thou art a knave, and no knave ; what an  
equivocal companion is this ?

*Par.* I am a poor man, and at your majesty's com-  
mand.

*Laf.* He's a good drum, my lord, but a naughty orator.

*Dia.* Do you know he promis'd me marriage ?

*Par.* 'Faith, I know more than I'll speak.

*King.* But wilt thou not speak all thou know'st ?

*Par.* Yes, so please your majesty. I did go between  
them, as I said ; but more than that, he lov'd her : For  
indeed he was mad for her, and talk'd of Satan, and of  
limbo, and of suries, and I know not what : yet I was in  
that credit with them at that time, that I knew of their  
going to bed, and of other motions, as promising her  
marriage, and things that would derive me ill-will to  
speak of ; therefore I will not speak what I know.

*King.* Thou hast spoken all already, unless thou canst  
say they are married ; but thou art too fine in thy evi-  
dence ; therefore stand aside. This ring, you say, was  
yours ?

*Dia.* Ay, my good lord.

*King.* Where did you buy it ? or who gave it you ?

*Dia.*



*Dia.* It was not given me, nor did I buy it.

*King.* Who lent it you?

*Dia.* It was not lent me neither.

*King.* Where did you find it then?

*Dia.* I found it not,

*King.* If it were yours by none of all these ways,  
How could you give it him.

*Dia.* I never gave it him.

*Laf.* This woman's an easie glove, my lord, she goes  
off and on at pleasure.

*King.* This ring was mine, I gave it his first wife.

*Dia.* It might be yours, or hers, for ought I know.

*King.* Take her away, I do not like her now,  
To prison with her: And away with him.  
Unless thou tell'st me where thou hadst this ring,  
Thou diest within this hour.

*Dia.* I'll never tell you.

*King.* Take her away.

*Dia.* I'll put in bail, my Liege.

*King.* I think thee now some common customer.

*Dia.* By *Jove*, if ever I knew man, 'twas you.

*King.* Wherefore hast thou accus'd him all this while?

*Dia.* Because he's guilty, and he is not guilty;  
He knows I am no maid, and he'll swear to't;  
I'll swear I am a maid, and he knows not.  
Great King, I am no strumpet, by my life;  
I'm either maid, or else this old man's wife.

[*Pointing to Lafeu.*

*King.* She does abuse our ears; to prison with her.

*Dia.* Good mother, fetch my bail. Stay, royal Sir,

[*Ex. Widow.*

The jeweller that owes the ring is sent for,  
And he shall surety me. But for this lord, [To Bert.  
Who hath abus'd me, as he knows himself,  
Tho' yet he never harm'd me, here I quit him.  
He knows himself my bed he hath defil'd,  
And at that time he got his wife with child;  
Dead tho' she be, she feels her young one kick  
So there's my riddle, one that's dead is quick.  
And now behold the meaning.

*Enter*

*Enter Helena and Widow.*

*King.* Is there no exorcist  
Beguiles the truer office of mine eyes?  
Is't real that I see?

*Hel.* No, my good lord,  
'Tis but a shadow of a wife you see,  
The name, and not the thing.

*Ber.* Both, both, oh pardon!

*Hel.* Oh, my good lord, when I was like this maid,  
I found you wond'rous kind; there is your ring,  
And look you, here's your letter: This it says,

*When from my finger you can get this ring,  
And are by me with child, &c.* This is done.

Will you be mine, now you are doubly won?

*Ber.* If she, my Liege, can make me know this  
clearly.

I'll love her dearly, ever, ever dearly.

*Hel.* If it appear not plain, and prove untrue,  
Deadly divorce step between me and you.

O, my dear mother, do I see you living?

*[To the Countess.]*

*Laf.* Mine eyes smell onions, I shall weep anon:  
God *Tom Drum*, lend me a handkerchief, *[To Parolles.]*  
So, I thank thee, wait on me home. I'll make sport with  
thee: Let thy courtesies alone, they are scurvy ones.

*King.* Let us from point to point this story know,  
To make the even truth in pleasure flow:  
If thou beest yet a fresh uncropped flower, *[To Diana.]*

Chuse thou thy husband, and I'll pay thy dower;

For I can guess, that by thy honest aid,  
Thou kept'st a wife her self, thy self a maid.

Of that and all the progress more or less,  
Resolvedly more leisure shall express:

All yet seems well, and if it end so meet,

The bitter past, more welcome is the sweet.

*[Exeunt.]*

F I N I S.



# EPILOGUE.

Spoken by the KING.

**T**HE King's a beggar, now the play is done:  
All is well ended, if this suit be won,  
That you express content; which we will pay,  
With strife to please you, day exceeding day;  
Ours be your patience then, and yours our parts.  
Your gentle hands lend us, and take our hearts.



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